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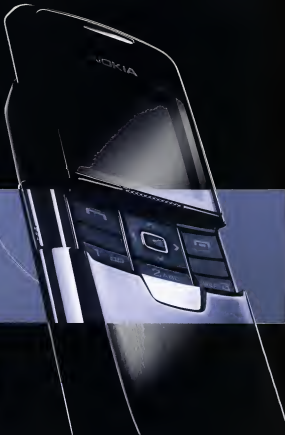


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## ScoreCard



**NOVA SCOTIA**  
Education department's plan to roll a Merit-based salary scale about criteria at its "best" policy than about teacher Lee's learning percentage of social injustice. Pick it up, led, and decide for yourselves. "Just heard I would lose it," Lee wrote. "I never level to read."



**NORTH POLE**  
No longer considered a challenge, so RFI adventurers head for Northern Pole of last season's—about 700 km farther away. Who knew there were so many poles? Expect usual headlines as they discover Pole of Really Experts Ice Russia.



**NO NAMES**  
Number of people entering the victim's identity protection program jumped 10 per cent last year, prompting calls from some left to expand the system of taxpayer-funded emergency. Opposition MPs likely to question this, saying Liberal backbench already big enough.



**THE WAVE**  
Singapore introduces the "Good Wave" as a way to defuse disputes over drivers' "errors of judgment." North Asians use similar strategies, and with fewer fingers.



## Pakistan | After the quake, homelessness and suffering

Past came the 7.6 magnitude earthquake that killed some 40,000 people and injured 51,000 more in northeast Pakistan, India and the disputed Kashmir region. There came the rain and snow and mudslides that destroyed roads, hampered risk of efforts and left two million people homeless, many in remote Himalayan villages, brudding helplessly without shelter or food. In the current international climate of disaster fatigue, aid was slow in coming—frustrating survivors clanked at the rubble with bare hands and curled wounded family members

The United Nations called for US\$272 million, of which about US\$115 million was pledged last week. But to let efforts were hampered by rain, snow and mudslides.

for miles in search of medical attention. The United Nations called for aid of US\$272 million, and got pledges of roughly US\$115 million from 30 nations, including Canada. But the promises didn't begin to relieve the suffering. As victims gathered in trenches without proper sanitation, clean drinking water, dozens of sherdubs hit the area, and panic began to set in along with colder temperatures. Said one British relief worker in India's North West Province, "The whole valley is smoldering with fire. Conditions are going from bad to worse."

**Quote of the week** | "She is the Iron Lady, and I want to be just like that when I grow up." British actress JEMMA GOLDING, 15, paying tribute to Margaret Thatcher at the former PM's 80th birthday party

**TEACHERS** As parents scrambled to find care for 600,000 kids, B.C. teachers were not to enter the second week of an illegal strike. They are protesting the imposition of a two-year contract by the B.C. government, it contains no pay increase or improved teaching conditions. A judge forbade the union from using its funds to pay the strikers.

**OL MONEY** Blasts with royalties from sky-high gas and prices, the Alberta treasury is going to cut a \$800 cheque for virtually every Albertan. Farmers will get less help, while prisoners will be excluded from the \$1.4-billion "revenue rebate."

**NICKEL** They have been rivals and catch-horns for decades in Sudbury, Ont., but last week Inco Ltd. announced a friendly takeover of fellow nickel-mining company Falconbridge Ltd. It will cost \$12.3 billion and will create the world's largest nickel producer.

**WORKING** Eighty per cent of immigrants aged 25 to 44 found a job within two years, according to a massive long-term survey by Statistics Canada. Of those same immigrants, nearly 60 per cent had been employed for more than 18 months, although only 42 per cent of those studied found employment in their chosen field.

**LEGIONNAIRES** After health officials last week said there were no new cases in a

Toronto outbreak of "legionnaires' disease," the discovery of two more ill people has caused concern. The two had no contact with the Bevan Oaks Home for the Aged, where an outbreak killed 17 people and made another 110 sick. The Ontario government has asked for an independent report on the outbreak.

**REIGNED** Greg Savelle stepped down as Ontario's finance minister the evening before his government was to deliver its Speech from the Throne. A spreading RCMP criminal investigation into Royal Group Technologies had caused Savelle to search for someone to run the firm as well as his family's Sorbus Group, which has ties to Royal Group. Dwight Daxson, formerly energy minister, took over the finance portfolio.

**SHOCKY** Syria's interior minister Ghazi Kanaan was found dead in his Damascus office, apparently a suicide. Kanaan had been questioned last month by UN investigators looking into the mysterious fire of former Lebanese PM Rafik Hariri in February. Many suspect Syrian involvement, and Kanaan had been his government's key minister in Lebanon for two decades. Specu-

tion about whether he may have been involved started immediately.

**GERMANY** After weeks of political bickering following Germany's right election, Angela Merkel was set to become the country's first female chancellor as part of a power-sharing agreement with the party of outgoing Chancellor Gerhard Schröder. But Merkel had to give key ministries, including finance, foreign, labour, justice and health, to Schröder's Social Democrats.

**FOCUS** George W. Bush's approval rating fell to 39 per cent, just one per cent among blacks, with only 20 per cent of Americans saying the country was on the right track. Meanwhile, President Bush's choice for the Supreme Court, Harriet Miers, is facing growing opposition from Republicans for not being conservative enough. Topping that off is increasing worry that his chief political aide, Karl Rove, could soon be charged for revealing a CIA operative's name to the media.

**WAVE** The winds of Hurricane Stan were bad enough, but what Central America didn't need was the most costly work of reconstruction that triggered mudslides due left more than \$50,000 in need of shelter and provisions. Guatemala bore the brunt of the crisis, with more than 650 confirmed dead and another 1,300 missing and presumed buried beneath tons of mud.

**HOMELAND** Secessionists divided over whether a new flag of ancient bones in Indonesia supports the theory of a species of hobbit-like people who lived some 13,000 years ago, sharing the Earth with modern humans. Proponents believe the fragments of nine people who have just been found still harbor mother discoveries, while skeptics claim they are remains of departed modern humans.

**ANCIENT FIRST FOOD** Scientists unearthed a 4,000-year-old pot of noodles in north-western China, setting tongue-twisting the classic debate as to whether pasta was first developed in Italy, the Middle East or China. Believed to have been eaten in an earthquake or flood, the pot contained 50 cm-long thin yellow noodles made out of millet.

BY MICHAEL DE AGOSTI



## Mansbridge on the Record



## A MADE-IN-CHINA WORLD

What do Saddam Hussein timepieces and hockey equipment have in common?

I HAVE A PENCHANT for collecting watches. It's a bad habit—after all, how many watches does one person need? Still, I can't seem to pass a watch store, booth or sidewalk stand without at least having a look.

Just before the Iraq war started, during a quick trip into Baghdad, I asked my colleague Don Murray where I could pick up a Saddam Hussein watch—assuming they wouldn't be around much longer. Before long we were walking down a narrow marketplace, being escorted by friendly watch sellers on both sides—all of whom had an ample supply of Saddam timepieces to offer, some of which simply had a cut-out of the Iraqi dictator stuck underneath the glass. Plain as daytime, they sold for under US\$30, and I grabbed a few.

But it didn't take me long to realize the store had more to offer on the watch front. For a bit more cash, merchants were also offering top-of-the-line knock-offs, and I was interested. I know my knock-offs, and these were superior to those the norm (i.e., the ones that often leave a green ring around your wrist after a few days). They could surely be mistaken for the real deal, and as I reached for my money I asked the dealer where they came from. His answer: China.

Now, I don't know with any certainty whether he really knew where the watchmaker lived, but I often think of that moment when I think the "Made in China" label on the things I see on Canadian shelves. It's quite remarkable how, in just a few years, China (and India to a lesser degree) has become such a major man-

ufacturer of so much of what we consume.

Clothing is one area we've used to, but in the last week, two personal shopping missions have brought the reality of the massive Chinese "invasion" for lack of a better term, home to our family. Can there be anything more Canadian than hockey equipment? Apparently not when it comes to shoulder, knee and elbow pads. When we went through what was needed for our rapidly growing six-year-old, much of the gear, with brand names we all grew up with, was, you guessed it, "Made in China." It's the new outsourcing. Then, the other day, I finally collected my technologically challenged courage to at least consider the new iPod—the really tiny one, not much bigger than a credit card. Analyze, upon inspection, it is "Assembled in China."

Some still see this as trading with the enemy—a country in the grips of a Communist dictatorship that has serious human rights issues. But others argue that it's also a country that almost single-handedly is determining the world's economic future. And if you drink we're doing a lot of drinking with China, look south of the border, where China aims on the verge of replacing Canada as the United States' No. 1 importer. (Not to mention that other contentious Washington already has with Beijing—China holds much of the debt the U.S. is racking up for the Iraq conflict and hurricane Katrina.) No wonder Paul Martin wants his government to focus on China, and how it's outflanking even the trade game. This war is no longer a slogan, and it may only get bigger—ask what they want shipping cars.

By the way, 20 years after my Baghdad trip, all the watches, even the ones with Saddam's smiling face, are still ticking away. Wonder whether he got one in time.

Peter Mansbridge is Chief Correspondent of CBC Television News and anchor of *The National*. To comment: [fmans@nbc.com](mailto:fmans@nbc.com)

## Passages

**AWARDED** Harold Pinter, 75, British playwright (*The Homecoming*, *The Caretaker*) and screenwriter (*The French Lieutenant's Woman*), was the surprise winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.



Literature. The Swedish academy praised Pinter as the "literary representative of British drama in the second half of the 20th century." He will receive the prize—and US\$1.3 million in cash—in Stockholm this December.

**CHARGED** Anne-Marie Peladeau, 40, from 21 criminal counts related to various thefts, after a witness chose that evidence in domestic arrest captured on videotape by TVA television in Montreal. The footage showed Quebec provincial police demanding handcuffed woman against a cruiser. Only with her arrest was the tape revealed to be the sister of media person Pierre Karl Peladeau, CEO of Quebecor Inc., which owns TVA and prom. Macdonald.

**DIED** Photographer John Hartigan, 94, was best known for his intimate photos of the Palladium. Lived in the Canadian Arctic between 1945 and 1955. He travelled with a grade across vast stretches of the tundra by dog sled, shooting only a few shots at a time to keep his hands from freezing. Hartigan died in Toronto after suffering a heart attack.



**DIED** Gay activist George Hinkley, 75, pioneered the fight for survivor's pension benefits for gays and lesbians by serving as the lead plaintiff in a landmark 1999 class-action suit against Ontario. He died in Toronto of cancer.

**LAUNCHED** China sent two astronauts, Nie Huihui, and Fei Junrong, into space for five days in what it called a crucial step toward establishing a permanent space station and putting an astronaut on the moon. The launch site was closed to foreign journalists.

## THE WORLD'S HELP DESK

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punch will score for a business-Liberal government. Liberal strategists neatly say that Canadians were born "The centre has shifted a tad to the right on economic matters. It's now an article of faith that we not go back into deficit, that inflation remain low," says Steven Madlunas, the party's national director. But at the same time, he adds, "Canadians' values have hardened around maintaining our health care system, the environment, investment in quality of life." From that dual view of voters, sketching the next platform isn't hard: a business-oriented social package, perhaps built around education and daycare, set against a business-friendly economic backdrop, subtly blending motherhood fiscal prudence and Pacific Rim trade promotion.

A more volatile compound in the Liberal democracy yet is opposition on U.S. relations. Here again, Clarkson induces voters for half-knowledgeably gobbling up Liberal half-truths. He points to Martin's shift on U.S. national missile defence. After looking like he was leaning strongly toward participation, Martin pulled back under pressure from within his party—but not before he had agreed to Washington's proposal to reform NORAD, allowing the shared Canada-U.S. defence command to run the program to shoot down rogue missiles. "We put ourselves on the back and say we're not taking part in it, but in fact we are," Clarkson says. "I think we're complicit in the Liberal party's hypocrisy."

If Clarkson is right that Canadians favour an almost contradictory combination of acquiescence and independence when it comes to the U.S., then Martin's contentions that he caught out of reports as a weapon to get Washington to accept NAFTA rulings on softwood appear politically savvy. Clarifying energy exports, as most Canadians surely realize, would be a highly unlikely headbill tactic. But telling that way appeals to nationalistic instincts.

If Liberals can count on voters to accept some cautious positions, Clarkson suggests the results often help within the public. He credits—or accuses—journalists in the remarkable 11th-hour rebound of Martin's unsteady 2004 campaign. The Liberal bid to portray Harper's Conservatives as dangerous extremists only started to work, he argues, after the press bought in to it. "Since the Liberals' fear campaign had not initially triumphed," he writes, "it appeared that the media's unconscious role in contrary-



Prime Minister in 1978: voters like a touch of anti-Americanism with their nationalism

ing the election as a decision about extreme social conservatism ultimately delivered the Liberal victory."

The view that a complacent media is part of the Liberal success formula is shared by many Conservatives and New Democrats. Not surprisingly, Martin strategists don't see it that way. They argue that the success of the campaign largely to hard-hitting advertising, such as their TV ad aimed at Ontario voters that linked Harper's negative images of Brian Mulroney and former premier Mike

## IMMIGRATION, education and sabre-rattling on softwood are typical run-from-the-left nationalist strategies

Martin. Rather than shoveling any issue about the value of sympathetic racism, Martin's team gained faith in how generation-skewed attack ads can sway voters.

The fact that Ontario mirrored so overwhelmingly last time our points to a current Liberal weakness. Clarkson traces the party's dominance back to Wilfrid Laurier's 1896 election victory, which established a nationwide Liberal coalition that accommodated French and English. And in this election, he says, the Liberals have much longer to remember who they are.

win—Liberals usually missed the broadest nationwide reach and the best balance between Quebec and English Canadian support. Most much now, though. The sponsorship scandal severely weakened them in Quebec, leaving Ontario as virtually the sole source of their power. So Liberals are desperately looking for ways to expand their base, starting with a B.C.-winning push for more Chinese trade and investments.

Blend social and business themes, play off the Americans, strive to be pan-Canadian—Liberals aim to shore elements again and again. But another concern must be most galling to their opponents: their mastery of using power to stay in power. The governing party's ability to make appointments, dispense patronage, and recruit talent looms large in Clarkson's book—and in Martin's recent record. He recruited Frank McKenna as a high-profile ambassador to the U.S., hooked Bernard Stoltz with the hat of cabinet clerk, and snagged Michéle Jean, whose appointment as Governor General restored fading Liberal hopes in key Montreal-area ridings with big ethnic votes.

More than any new policy, these shrewd appointments show the Big Red Machine is still capable of firing on all cylinders. The sponsorship scandal may have rocked the Liberals, but they are concerned in familiar ways. "Time would appear to be on their side," Clarkson says, "rather than on that of their opponents." Harper can only hope he's wrong—or try to force a snap election in the fall, before the Liberals have much longer to remember who they are.

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## A CASE OF SINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX?

Even Peter Kent jokes about his 'suicidal' challenge



SOME PEOPLE wear their politics on their sleeve. Peter Kent's are whipped around his belt. The former news anchor's 1997 Jeep, 70,000 km and counting, has been turned into a rolling billboard in his early campaign to capture a federal seat in St. Paul's, a midtown Toronto riding. A large blue Conservative logo now adorns the hood. The quarter-panel tells voters to "Stand Up for Canada." And the spare tire promises change from the Liberals: "Flores: government, integrity, and a fair share." Kent has

been parking the Jeep outside his home in the enclave of Cabbagetoown, and his wife, Cilla, warns about someone vandalizing it. So far, the locals have reacted thus: less democratic principles—although Bob Katz's sister, who lives across the street, has pointedly asked if Kent couldn't at least park it down the block.

One thing is missing from the vehicle—Kent's picture. After four decades in TV, covering Vietnam, anchoring CBC's *National* and *Journal*, working as an NBC correspondent, and for the past 13 years fronting Global, people are familiar with his spitting good looks. "Face recognition isn't the problem," he says. The real challenge is convincing Torontonians that Stephen Harper's Tories are a viable option, rather than a wild-eyed bunch of fundamentalists. "Our party in the wilderness have allowed a certain conditioning by both the Liberal machine in the city and the Liberal media apologist," says Kent.

Too often, Harper has been "demonized," and fringe voices in his caucus portrayed as the party miscreants. "Things have been said. But there are wackos in the Liberal party who have made equally strong statements. There are narrow minds in every political party. The Conservative narrow minds have had disproportionate coverage."

Kent's snap transition from reporter to critic has helped put his campaign in the spotlight. When the 62-year-old declared in May, it was a made-for-TV moment. "I'm a media hell!" he told the camera, quoting the fed-up anchorman-turned-consider Howard Stern in the Hollywood classic *Network* (he plays not the wisest cinematic reference, since the film tracks Stern's descent into lunacy). A few weeks later, he challenged journalists schools to monitor the coverage of the coming election for anti-Tory bias. Skewed reporting is

a day-to-day reality, says Kent, pointing the finger at the Toronto Star, Globe and Mail and CBC. "It's the focus on trivial or confused issues that can be made to resonate by effective communications," he says candidly. (Kent still works for Global, but no longer has a hand in the news.)

If his colleagues and fans are surprised by the transformation, they shouldn't be. Kent's a bomb-dropper from way back. Named CBC anchor at only 33 ("the epitome of the swinging new breed of TV newsman," *Weekend* magazine wrote in 1977), also mentioning his habit of playing his bongo along with *The Tonight Show* anchorman, he was "renowned" to Africa 20 years later, after complaining to the CBC that the Trudeau government was interfering with the news. Over the years, he's been a regular contributor to op-ed and letter pages—with the public broadcaster a favourite target.

Kent, pro-choice and a supporter of same-sex marriage, is vowed to be equally outspoken if elected, taking on both the Liberals and the "regional vice-presidents" that have pushed his party to the right. "We've got all the stars pulling in one side," he says. "We have to balance it out and go in a true direction." A boy of big Mackinac-style names are leading his support—Michael Wilton, Stanley Hearn, former St. Paul's MP Barbara McDougall—along with Ontario Tory leader John Tory, and strategist John Lauchengier.

But despite his profile, few observers are giving Kent much of a chance. St. Paul's has gone Liberal for four straight elections. Carolyn Kessner, the public health minister and a popular local physician, won by 21,000 votes in 2004. Kent, who is helping to raise money for inner-known Tories, doesn't

even live in the riding, and he jokes about his "suicidal" challenge. Pinned for an explanation, there's a broader about how his eventual victory will be "all the sweeter," talk about his

It doesn't help that Kent isn't living in the riding he's campaigning

love of the party has travelled. "If I can help other boys run, the city, the party, and the country will be better for it..." Thom's brief pause and a smile, as the manual edit button clicks on... local, a weary self-effacing way. "Maybe he's better prepared for Ottawa than most. Nobody is going to have as much to say the difference between a good and a bad sound bite."

Jonathan Gathehouse is a freelance reporter.



## SO MUCH FOR THE PEACENIKS

Why the anti-war movement is political poison

**NOT SO LONG AGO**, to question the Iraq war in America was to offer up one's patriotism for vilification on cable TV talk shows. Public opinion was rallied around the flag, the President, and the 2003 invasion. But with the number of American troops killed in Iraq approaching 2,000, a majority of Americans have begun telling pollsters that they don't think their country will win the war. Nearly two-thirds say some or all of the U.S. troops should be withdrawn. A slight majority of Americans want to cut spending on the war to pay for hurricane relief, according to a recent Gallup poll, and a Pew Research

Center survey showed a record number—60 per cent—now say it was a mistake to invade in the first place.

More than 150,000 people marched on Washington last month in support of pulling American troops out of Iraq. Pre-humans, the national news was flamed on Cindy Sheehan, the mother of a soldier killed in Iraq who was camped out in front of George W. Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas. Post-humans, reporters asked whether National Guard units deployed in the desert should have been at the bayou instead.

And still, the anti-war movement has not

managed to push its way from the outer fringes of activism to the political center stage. Activists say they are frustrated with their elected leaders. Never mind Republicans—they mean the Democrats. "There is not a single figure in the Democratic party who is pushing the war and bring the troops home now," says Bill Dalbey, a spokesman for United for Peace and Justice, the largest U.S. anti-war coalition. "It's going to take a surge and a shock" to change their minds, he said.

On the day of the Washington demonstration, Democratic heavyweights such as Hillary Rodham Clinton and John Kerry were notably absent. Several pieces of legislation calling for withdrawal joined his gush in Congress. One proposed Senate resolution calling on the Bush administration to develop a plan for ending the war has only two co-sponsors. "Beyond people having policy meetings, we have not seen any big swing in direction, even though public opinion has shifted dramatically," says Ted

Lewis, the human rights director for Global Exchange, a San Francisco-based international human rights organization.

Sheehan herself has written that the "War Hawks Demo" she has met with were "equally free men, did everything" from the Republicans. "Although my meeting with Senator Clinton were well, I don't believe she will do anything to affect the unfolding of the American war longer the Iraq people the complex of last month. Clinton, like some other senator Democrats, want to audience and fund the invasion, and has called for increasing the number of American troops in the region to quell the insurgency.

Even the anti-war efforts of last year's primaries, Howard Dean, has struck a more measured tone since becoming chairman of the Democratic National Committee, orga-

"There is a lot at stake here," says William Galston, a one-time policy adviser to President Bill Clinton and now the director of the Institute for Philosophy and Public Policy at the University of Maryland. In a 79-page memo to Democrats outlining voting records and strategizing the path back to power, he and fellow Clinton White House adviser Elaine Kamarck, a lecturer at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, advised the party to avoid pandering to its base. Nevertheless, how many liberal Democrats want to vote, the party still needs independent and moderate voters to win, they said. "To win these voters, Democrats need to show a powerful message. 'Democrats must emphasize the importance of the American military as a potential force for good in the world, and is so doing they need to engage 'Michael

overson,' Galston says. It was a little bit all over again at the September demonstration. Some participants complained that the use of Iraq message was all but abandoned by a majority of speakers. It was no surprise that Hillary Clinton and company didn't want to share stage with speakers from the Socialist Front of Puerto Rico, the defenders of Cuba's Communist Revolution, or one of the U.S. attorney general Ramsey Clark, who has joined the legal team for the defense Saddam Hussein before the Iraq Special Tribunal.

Yet there are strategies that proved a deep split to come. Over the summer, more than 60 liberal Democrats in the House formed the Out of Iraq Caucus, a group dedicated to developing an exit strategy. There are also bills in Congress that range from calling for withdrawal by October 2006, to ruling out the creation of permanent American military bases in Iraq, to forbidding schools from giving student information to military recruiters without explicit permission. They have yet to draw much support, though the withdrawal resolution co-sponsored



**DEMOCRAT**  
heavyweights like Howard Dean and Hillary Clinton aren't helping. The party needs to woo moderates, and history favours the hawks.



ing that "now that we're there, we're there, and we can't get out." Some of Dean's followers are disappointed with other liberal Democrats to create Progressive Democrats of America, a group intended to counterbalance the more centrist influence of the Democratic Leadership Committee. This summer they gathered Dean with a petition signed by 200,000 Democrats disavowing with his position. "We are frustrated that the continued rhetoric of 'out and out' is coming forward. It's giving the Bush administration the story that we wanted," says Kevin Spill, the group's deputy director.

Once left, the divide between the party's leadership and base reflects a genuine split between those who believe the American presence in Iraq inflames the insurgency, and those who argue that a departure would be irresponsible and destructive and Iraq's security forces are strengthened. But also reflects a deeper divide about the road and future of the Democratic party, which has been shut out of the White House for two terms and faces an uphill battle to regain control of Congress in next year's mid-term elections.

Moore Democrats "who instinctively view American power as suspect," they wrote.

History appears to be with the hawks. Despite the enthusiastic support of peace activists, Senator Eugene McCarthy and his anti-Vietnam war platform won less than a quarter of the votes at the party's 1968 convention. Anti-war candidate George McGovern won the Democratic nomination in 1972 on a platform of withdrawal from Vietnam, but was defeated by Richard Nixon in a landslide. Anti Democrats are still paying the price for their association with the anti-war counterinsurgency crowd of the 1960s, insists Galston. "Democrats are consistently discouraged in areas of defense and foreign policy, and that's a direct legacy of the Vietnam war," he said.

At the 1972 convention, the anti-war message became entangled with broader anti-Americanism. "It's one thing to say Vietnam was a mistake, but a different thing to say we should pull out," he says. He also says that a lot of people missed that line in Iraq that were damaging to the party and inflicted long-term damage that we are still trying to

by North Carolina Republican Walter Jones, who led the charge to resume French flights in the House cafeteria to "Freedom Fries" in protest of France's opposition to the Iraq invasion. His effort for civilian aid (buses that have been hard hit by losses in Iraq).

Activists admit it's a tough fight, but they want to shake up the party by raising anti-war candidates against mainstream Democrats next November. The Democrats will still have to decide whether to make the war an election issue. There's little reason to, says Washington-based Democratic strategist Steven Ballwin. The war is not a winning priority for "the middle" of the country. "While they are pretty angry against the war, it's not their most important issue," he says. Nor is there any reason for Democrats to fight against themselves while Bush's popularity slips and the GOP is mired in controversy over the hurricane response, Indonesian affairs, Hurricane Katrina, and a split with its own base on habeas corpus. As Ballwin puts it: "There is a classic advice not to get in front of your opponent when they are driving off a cliff." □



Interview | Tariq Ramadan

## 'TERROR IS A FACT, NOT AN IDEOLOGY'

**TARIQ RAMADAN** is a security threat to some, a puzzle to others, and by some accounts, Europe's most innovative and controversial Muslim scholar. He was recently banned from teaching in the U.S., and just was consulted by British Prime Minister Tony Blair in the wake of the London terrorist attacks. Ramadan, 43, says Muslims must break from tradition, reread the scriptures, then terror and better adjust to the Western world. He recently spoke to Maclean's Quebec Bureau Chief Benoît Aubin.

If you're such a moderate, why all the controversy around you?

If you try to act as a bridge between two worlds, you must accept that you will be controversial on both sides. People who know the fact that my view was revealed in the U.S. often admit to say that I cannot enter Saudi

Arabia, Egypt and Tunisia either, because I have been critical of the dictatorship there.

Who are your enemies?

Extremists of all stripes. Authoritarian regimes, allegors to criminals. I have been critical of the Israeli government and its policies, and of the oppression of the Palestinians, and was

called anti-Semitic for that. The biggest controversies come from France. The problem there is not with Tariq Ramadan, it is with the special relationship that France has with religion. Islam is the religion of former colonialists who are now equal citizens, and that creates a problem for many there—been a symbol of it. It is also controversial in the Muslim world. I called for a movement against the death penalty and racism. That was nothing for Westerners, but too much for many Muslims.

Does religion make it harder for Muslims to integrate into a country like Canada?

There is nothing in Islam that prevents people from being fully Canadian and practicing Muslims, but that perception often is that there is, and that Muslims must withdraw or build walls around themselves. Muslims must learn not to segregate themselves if they want to gain acceptance.

What advice did you give the British government after the London attacks?

The racist bombings were an attack on British and Muslims, so perhaps there is responsibility to create change. Muslims must come to grips with the fact that it is not acceptable to kill people in London because they don't agree with the British policy in Iraq. They also must acknowledge that there are extremist interpretations of the Quran that must be condemned. The Islamic education children receive often nurtures an unwillingness to understand, self-imposed segregation is a cause of the problem. And the British government has responsibilities as well: it must reach out more, integrate things that would give value to the Muslim presence into the mainstream school curriculum.

You denounce the "ideology of fear," but what about Islamist terror?

Terror is a fact, not an ideology, and we must be very clear in condemning it. But admitting the reality of terror does not demand recurring fear or hatred. Islamisation on both sides, though, have a vested interest in promoting a permanent state of fear. The British administration is nurturing the ideology of fear. Muslims are nurturing it as well, saying the West doesn't like Islam. Fear feeds more fear. If you as a Western citizen are obsessed with Muslim criminals, you are not going to trust other Muslims, if I am obsessed with the fire-rick parties, I am not going to trust any of my fellow citizens. Dialogue is the only way to push people to change. That takes time. **M**



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# MOCKING THE GENERALS

A daring comedy troupe risks arrest by performing nightly in a country where political satire is no joke

International attention and politicians' acerbic greetings to Aung San Suu Kyi, the world's only imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize winner, when she observed her 60th birthday in June. They have repeatedly petitioned the generals running the rogue state of Myanmar (formerly Burma) to release the country's democratically elected leader. But still she spends her days, as she has for much of the past 16 years, alone, under house arrest in Yangon (formerly Rangoon).

Suu Kyi could leave Myanmar—but the generals would not allow her to return. Her choice to remain has made her a potent symbol of freedom in a country famous for its blatant human rights violations. She is also the inspiration for an unlikely group of supporters who risk imprisonment themselves to help keep the voice of democracy alive. In a country where political satire is no joke, the Moustache Brothers, a remarkable troupe of entertainers, make it their business to poke fun at the generals. On a restaurant, Toronto-based writer and photographer Anne Baym, granddaughter of Dr. U Be Yin, a founder of the Burmese democracy movement, dropped in on the entertainers. Her report.

**YOU CAN STILL** be an ordinary tourist in Yangon, visit the temples, rent a taxi, buy exotic silk, sleep in hotels with names like Beverly Hills. If your lights occasionally flicker, you know a generator will kick in and come to the rescue. You can take fragrant tea at the newly renovated Serravallo Hotel, exchange glassware with the monks. You're even allowed to visit the stately former home of Aung San, the founder of democratic Burma. Now a museum, it's listed in Lonely Planet, a guidebook that's supposedly banned, but everyone carries it.

Aung San was murdered, along with members of his cabinet, in 1947. He was 32. His daughter, Aung San Suu Kyi, got caught up in a second struggle for democracy in 1988. "I could not as my father's daughter remain indifferent to all that was going on," she has said. That September, the army massacred students and monks in a brutal crackdown much like the more notorious one in Beijing's Tiananmen Square a year later. In 1990, Suu Kyi's party, the National League for Democracy, won a sweeping election victory with 82 percent of parliamentary seats, even though the generals, determined to hold onto power, had placed her under house arrest, without trial. They simply ignored

the election. Since then, Suu Kyi has spent her life mostly confined to home, a prison within the prison that is her country.

The Aung San museum just down the road, Suu Kyi's childhood home, has the smell of history. Upstairs, her bed is on your left in the child's room. Further up, through the window of the star room, there's a view of the famous golden dome of Yangon's Shwedagon Pagoda. After a stroll on the grounds, you can return to your hotel, order pizza and marvel in the historic nature of the hotel that, on one hand, acknowledges Aung San as a national hero while, on the other, denies his iconic daughter.

Myanmar is still a place where people disappear. Young men are routinely kidnapped and forced to join the army. Thousands of political prisoners are behind bars in inhuman conditions. Recent bombings in a seemingly endless series of attacks, Mandalay and Yangon, are a fresh reminder that this predominantly Buddhist nation lives in a perpetual state of anarchy and chaos.

Most sophisticated Burmese, people who live well and wicked abroad, who won't refer to Suu Kyi by name. They call her "the Lady"—when they mention her, it is in whispers. But gradually, the Moustache



Maw Gyi, and her right, knowing what she and Lay says, "The truth must be told." Saw Kyi in 2012 with a photo of her incarcerated father, Aung San.

Brothers say Suu Kyi's name loud and clear every night in their performances in Mandalay. In their dickered home theater, dubbed Broadway on 79th, this troupe celebrates her and mocks the government that looks her up. A former journalist of her martyred father, Aung San, hangs from a wooden beam, and photographs of her with members of the troupe adorn the walls.

The Moustache Brothers, led by Maw Gyi, the only English-speaking member, perform traditional jaw—Burmese vaudeville. They are a fearless, irrepressible comedienne family of dancers and actors who perform where they choose because they're not allowed to work anywhere else. Blacklisted by the regime, they put their show on at 8 p.m. nightly, comedy that would be considered

ridiculous by Western standards but is death defying here because they are under no official sanction by military intelligence. They are fully aware that their "troupe" is at the whim of the army, but these days, as long as they continue their performance to tourists, they're being left alone.

Maw amazes his audience with his liberal use of zany clichés, but his underlying message is deadly serious. "We share the suffering of the people," he tells the 20 odd foreigners who donated the equivalent of \$3 each to see the show that evening. He jokes about Burma's devalued currency, the kyat, and life in prison. He shows a video clip of Hugh Grant referring to Burma's appalling human rights record in the film *About a Boy*. He claims the frequent power outages around the country are a deliberate ploy by the military to keep the population repressed, distracted and confused. "The government have the power and they use it all," says Maw, who was an antique generator to light the show. "Why? To make us nervous."

The Moustache Brothers are well aware of the risks they are taking. Two of them, Per Lay and cousin Lu San, performed as an Independence Day party that Aung San Suu Kyi hosted in 1994. They had the nerve to include visual jokes about generals taking money behind their backs. That earned them seven prison sentences, during which they were put to work building roads while their feet were shackled with iron rods. After 10 years, pressure by Amnesty International won their early release in July 2001. That very night, when fans came out to cheer them, they defied orders and put on a show.

I ask Lay, now in his mid-50s, how he endured prison. He lost his hair, suffered malnutrition and worse, he says. He explains how he used his skills as a comedian since in another prison over and became a leader. "You can put iron bars around him," says Maw of his brother, "but his heart and mind, no." "What about the risks they all take daily?" After midnight, Lay says, "the night cannot get darker."

Maw agrees. "Occasionally it's dangerous to tell our truth," he says with a grin. "But the music must be told. The world must know what's happening here." And perhaps the words and jokes that have the power to send them to jail are also what is helping to keep them going as long as the world pays attention. **B**



# HOW TO PLAY A PANDEMIC

A new kind of threat could shock the global economy and the markets

UNTI RECENTLY, portfolio strategists paid to look for potential problems in global financial markets confined themselves to discounting further investment from inflation driven by soaring oil and gas prices, deflation driven by low wages in China and India, rising short-term interest rates, government deficits, and the timing of the bursting of the housing bubble.

Butter suddenly, a new kind of threat has emerged: the possibility of a global pandemic that could shock the global economy and devastate financial markets.

Now, it seems, nearly everyone knows about H5N1—swine flu, which has reached Turkey and, possibly, Korea. Leading institutions such as Deutsche Bank are holding seminars in which epidemiologists tell institutional investors about this new killer flu that could overwhelm the hospital systems, kill tens of millions of people, shut down airlines, and even (possibly) force stock market closures.

Stories of the flu threat are no longer confined to the inside pages of newspapers—they're on the front pages of nearly all major papers, including the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Financial Times*—the two main reads for serious investors. As stock markets display queasiness, despite several corporate earnings, they could already be showing symptoms of flu fear.

Two months ago, our firm published a report for investors on swine influenza. The report from doctors, scientists and institutional investors was strongly positive, but much of the reaction from retail brokers and clients was even more strongly negative. Why, they complained to us, would their trade with a horror story from the backwoods of Asia? That serious feedback illustrates why governments and organizations have such difficulty in preparing their people for a pandemic. It's no homicide to contemplate, and nobody can guarantee it will strike within the next few months or years. Despite powerful commentary before congressional testimony and urgent pleas from President



George W. Bush, Congress has authorized only a few billion dollars to fund a preparedness and surveillance program that, critics say, is too slow to respond to the threat. But the Bush administration has made it relatively easy for Bush to get pandemic funds. Just

strengthen the federal on Lake Pontchartrain and avoid any flooding to the Mississippi. An environmental lawyer blocked that program, because it could mean damage to fragile wetlands. When Bush heard he would consider using the army for enforcing quarantine, leading Democrats panicked that it would be an unacceptable use of military force.

So, despite all the current publicity about the flu threat, investors would be wise to assume that most governments will not respond with enough resources, organization and compulsion to prevent a catastrophe if the current bird flu mutates into full-scale human-to-human transmission. It will achieve that breakthrough, experts believe, the way the Spanish flu of 1918 became the most serious pandemic since the Black Death. Scientists believe it mutated when one soldier on a base in Kansas, who had a nose bleed

from his system, contracted the killer virus. That virus recombined with the garden-variety flu, thereby acquiring that flu's most notable characteristic: its skill at spreading rapidly from human to human. The confined conditions of trench warfare made that easy—the rest is history. Depending on which history you believe, the death toll was 25 million, 50 million or 100 million. For essentially lethal virus today, roughly that toll by three or four.

From an investment standpoint, here's the bottom line on an outbreak. If it reaches even small-scale epidemic stage anywhere in the world, most governments will immediately impose embargoes, permitting no planes or ships or tourists from infected nations into their own countries. The likeliest region for an outbreak will be East Asia, where poultry, animals and humans—each in their billions—live in close proximity. The flu can progress from poultry to pigs to people without having to spread geographically. It would reach North America within months.

If the new pandemic materialized in 2018, the risk rate would be highest among the health care population cohort—ages 20 to 45. This would mean that many businesses and most hospitals would experience serious problems, both because of employees who were actually infected or, thereby, dead, and because others, understanding the risk and knowing there's no vaccine, would, like the New Orleans cops, not report for work.

The growth in globalism means that more and more of what the world produces and sells comes from international supply chain systems, which are typically managed on just-in-time inventory principles. For example, Canadians know that a prolonged closure of Windsor's Ambassador Bridge would mean shutting down auto assembly lines from Ohio to Quebec. But the process is more widespread: when a U.S. shopper buys



any one of thousands of items in Wal-Mart, an order goes to China that day to replace it; pharmaceutical manufacturers rely on profitable ingredients from around the world. This flu is almost endless.

victims of the 1918 pandemic, at Fort Riley, Kas. More than 20 million people died

## INVESTORS WITH contingency plans would soon find their best buying opportunities in decades

What would a worldwide outbreak of H5N1 do to the global economy? Answer: a temporary financial epidemic of panics, shakings, denials and bankruptcies. At least most segments of the economy across most parts of the world.

What does "temporary" mean? With luck, the pandemic would be over in 18 months to two years.

What would cause prolonged disruption across financial markets?

Since supply chains developed, we have never experienced a global pandemic. So no one knows how severe the impact on stock prices would be. But stocks globally are priced at generous multiples of expected earnings that would normally plummet. Investors who had made contingency plans

for a possible pandemic would soon find their best buying opportunities in decades. Which means their opportunities would arise from the distress of investors who had not made contingency plans for a possible pandemic.

What should investors do? Even though the risk of an worldwide pandemic is remote, you should not ignore it completely. Talk to your adviser. Identify the stocks you own that are most vulnerable in a temporary panic. If, after you've read about what this flu could do, you decide to take more defensive measures, use the opportunity to upgrade your portfolio by lowering its internal risk. Consider such diverse strategies as options, high-dollar blue chips, and a somewhat higher than usual holding of cash.

Most likely, those strategies will prove unnecessary and you would regret them—the way a buyer of term life insurance may regret, a year later, paying those premiums.

But . . .

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# Showing the Love

After two lean and mean decades, businesses are realizing they need to hang on to employees—and attract new ones. KATHERINE MACKLEM reports on the return of company loyalty.

UNLIKE MANY debt-laden twentysomethings struggling to enter the world of work, Ryan Dickson makes the transition look like a breeze. After two years of college studies for a technician's diploma, he registered for a four-year apprenticeship program and was hired by Dofasco Inc., a major steel producer in his hometown of Hamilton. In his first year, he earned \$40,000. Even during three four-month periods of study at college, he remained on Dofasco's payroll. Dickson, now 25, is weeks away from earning his papers. Loan-free and painfully employed, he intends to continue working at Dofasco. "I'm comfortable here and I like what I do," he says. And that's

music to the ears of senior managers at the company, which has invested heavily in training with the goal of creating a stable workforce for the future.

After two decades of lean and mean corporate management marked by layoffs, downsizing and cutbacks, the wingman of senior employees is suddenly aware that the workplace today is facing a crisis. "Gone are the days of lifetime employment in exchange for lifetime commitment," says the Confederation Board of Canada in a report on public trust, which states that the changing nature of the employee-employer relationship is a factor contributing to a broader decline of trust in Canada's public institutions. Companies have been asking their workforce for flexibility without providing compensation in return. While a more nimble workforce has allowed business to compete better in an increasingly global marketplace, this has come at a price. Workers have been asked that managing their work lives in their responsibility, that the five-cent lifetime is

the norm. The national has been the demise of employee loyalty.

Add to that Canada's demographics. The oldest baby boomers, at close to 60, are about to retire. Linda Duxbury, a business school professor at Carleton University who specializes in workplace issues, points out that for the last 25 years, the labour force in Canada has grown by roughly 226,000 a year. That number is now rapidly declining, and by 2010 only 42,000 new workers will be entering the workforce annually. "Within the next decade," Duxbury says, "for every two people who are retiring, there will be less than one person to take their place." Duxbury predicts that how a company manages its workforce will be critical to its business success—something the best employers in Canada have already figured out.

Canada's top employers are recognizing that not enough people are coming up through the ranks, says Anthony Meethan, president of Midwaycorp Canada Inc., the

publishing company that creates the list of Canada's 100 best employers. "It's a real change in the economy. When employers have somebody who is good, they don't mind spending money to keep them," adds Richard Yessens, author of Canada's Top 100 Employers. "Individual job seekers don't think they have a lot of power" but they do. As the leading edge of enlightened employers are the ones who have renewed their focus on employee loyalty. But unlike an earlier era of paternalistic bosses, today's best employers use the link between committed employees and the bottom line. They know that soon the strongest businesses will be the ones with the most engaged and stable workforces.

**FIVE YEARS AGO**, Dofasco's senior managers received a wake-up call. They had commissioned demographer David Foot to study their workforce and to measure the pool of potential future workers in the broader community. The average age of



Dofasco's employees turned out to be 44 and getting older, while the average length of service was 23 years. That meant that over the subsequent five to 10 years, an ever-whittling 50 to 70 per cent of workers would be eligible to retire. And the pool of potential, future talent was limited. "We recognized it would be better to plan and be prepared than to have to react," says Brian Mullin, director of human resources. "It was a big eye opener."

Dofasco now spends \$13 million a year on training and development, much of it on a revitalized apprenticeship program. Mullin estimates that for each of the 100 to 250 apprentices in the company's system at any

given time, Dofasco spends \$250,000, even though once they've finished their training, there's nothing stopping them from working for someone else. While the majority doing with Dofasco, Mullin expects other industries to become more aggressive in their attempts to lure the trained workers. Still, the program is regarded as part of Dofasco's corporate strategy and a way to keep the company viable. "It's not just a noble thing to do," says Mullin. "There's a solid business case."

Not only are progressive employers looking forward and training the next generation of workers, they are using increasingly sophisticated methods to sell their com-

panies as good places to work, both to current and potential employees. Borrowing from their marketing departments, some have started to think of themselves as brands, not to consumers but to workers. "Employer as a brand," says Yessens, "is new this year." The recruits are becoming marketers, Meethan adds. "They are selling the company to existing employees and also to new people." It's an interesting shift. In the past, human resources departments have been seen as a drag on business and a cost to the overall operation. "Now these guys call themselves talent acquisition specialists," Meethan says.

A Vancouver tech firm, Business Objects,





taken its branding seriously, recently creating a position called talent brand manager. Calie Adams, who holds the title, has commissioned surveys and focus groups asking employees what attracted them to the company, and what's keeping them there. She says close to key tech-oriented universities, to be on the lookout for future employees. She's working on a one-line statement that sums up her company's brand as an employer. One of the biggest parts of her job is public relations, she says, promoting the company as an employer of choice. The business case for all this effort is simple, says Greg Wolfe, general manager of North American operations for Business Objects, which, while based in San Jose, Calif., and Perm, has most of its employees in the Vancouver office. As one of the largest tech employers in the Lower Mainland area, Business Objects has to work hard both to attract new employees and to bring on its best. "Making investments into branding is no longer from a business perspective," Wolfe says.

Hamilton-Packard Co. is another tech company committed to its employees. Founded in Palo Alto, Calif., in 1939, HP has a long



standing reputation as a company that cares about its workforce as well as the community in which it does business. Well before these things became trendy, HP instituted such programs as employee health benefits, and donated money and equipment to charitable organizations. In 1947, HP's co-founder Dave Packard said: "The real reason HP exists is to make a contribution, to improve the welfare of humanity, to advance the frontiers of science. Profit is not the proper end of management; it is what makes all of the other aims possible."

Today, HP has a progressive, open-door management style, and unusual perks including a company-managed cottage in east arm Ontario that employees can use for free. But unlike many IT peers, where many workers are, on contract, HP limits the length of contracts to a maximum of two years. At that point, a manager should know if the work being done is a core function—and if it is, the person doing it should become a permanent employee, says Paul Turpin, CEO of HP's Canadian operations. "Employee

loyalty and engagement is a critical success factor for us," Turpin says. "By contracting to full-time employees, you absolutely get back commitment from them."

The high cost of employee turnover is another reason employees want to hold on to their workers. Included are hard costs, such as severance packages and recruitment fees, as well as soft costs, such as the loss of corporate wisdom, fractured relationships with customers and suppliers, and the amount of time it takes for new employees to get up to speed. Robert Meggs, president, CEO, and owner of Great Little Truck Company Ltd., which manufactures corrugated boxes and other packaging materials, says he is very conscious of the cost of recruiting and training new employees. A good employee can cost three times his salary to replace, says Meggs, an accountant by training. "Every time people leave, it just puts you back," he says. "The cost of replacing someone is huge."

Meggs has a solid strategy to keep his employees engaged. First, he opens the books

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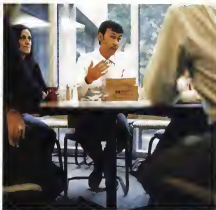
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to his staff. Even though Great Little Kan Co. is privately owned, he reports the company's income statement and balance sheet every month and then shares 13 per cent of the month's profits equally among employees. On average, Meggy says, employees receive \$150 to \$200. "It's like a bonus, paid on the next cheque," he says. Meggy also meets with all employees, in small groups of 10 to 15, and goes through the company's financial statements, line by line, so ensure that everyone understands the company's business. "Since we started sharing financials," says Meggy, "you can just see the more of trust is so much higher if you don't have fear. It's hard to create loyalty in a company." Meggy points out that it's not only a good stress that employees respond positively to an open book policy. In the last recession, the company went into the red, he says. "People would come to my office with ideas of how to save money."

Meggy also believes it important for his staff to get along with each other—and that it helps the bottom line. Not only do people who get along communicate better with each other and get their work done faster and more smoothly, Meggy noticed that people who didn't associate with their colleagues usually left the company within a couple of years. "In this era, the company has parties and social events, much like many employers. But in addition, it acts as a selective normal target, which Meggy calls the BOOX-Itig. Outgroups of employees target. If the BOOX-Itig is over, the whole company takes off for an extended weekend to an all-expense-paid exotic destination. For the last three years, helped by raising Canadian dollar, the company has met the BOOX target. Last April, employees descended on the Luceau Las Vegas, one of the largest hotel complexes in the world. This coming spring, if the firmness in target—and is on track, Meggy says—employees will go to Mexico, where they celebrated in 2004. "You can't beat the holiday that comes with a trip like the one to Mexico," says Meggy.

For years, corporations have developed



Employee loyalty and engagement is a critical success factor for us," says a Top 100. "By committing to full-time employees, you absolutely get back commitment from them."

operational plans, marketing plans and sales plans, says Michel Tougas, managing principal with consulting firm Towers Perrin in Montreal. "Now, they are creating people plans," he says. The most sophisticated among them recognize that an engaged workforce is a more productive one. Still, as conducted by Towers Perrin shows a small number of workers are either highly engaged or highly disengaged. The big chunk of workers in the middle are neither—and that's where the opportunity for improvement lies, Tougas says. "Moving the needle a little bit among the masses in the middle makes a difference for employers," he says.



At Doctra, long-time employees recall the company's annual return in the early 1990s, which meant

rotations of early retirement offers, voluntary severance and, finally, layoffs. The workforce was cut from 12,390 to 7,500. Today, the turnover rate is about four per cent, Mullin says, with 80 per cent of that through retirement. And with sports teams, a recreation centre and one of the country's largest Christmas parties—30,000 people at Copps Coliseum—the company has a reputation as a decent employer. "There is no perfect environment. It's not like everyone is dressed in togas skipping through the workplace throwing rose petals over their shoulders," says Mullin. "But this is a good place to work." Still, the bad memories of the 1990s linger. "There wasn't a lot of bitterness, but some people felt wounded," says Mullin. "That impacts people's sense of security. So yeah, it takes time to build that up again."

ON THE WEB to read how we compiled Canada's Top 100 Employers list, visit [www.enr.com/stories/0604100](http://www.enr.com/stories/0604100)



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## THE BIG, BAD BOSS

When people quit, it's not the company they're leaving

**ALAS, THERE'S** no lack of bad bosses. More's the pity, they don't completely leave you, even after you've parted company. It's almost funny how vividly people recall the horror stories—even actual conversations, decades later—except that the colleagues that came with parting up with a cruel employer can also return in a flash.

For three years running, Joanne Wright\* was run down for the permanent position that went with the job she was actually doing. She did the work anyway, hosting a noon-hour radio show, having been "temporarily" bumped up from her regular job in the news room. Wright was unhappy because it meant she earned \$15,000 less than she would

have, but she loved the work and would have put up with it had her superior not been, in the parlance, "a Norderchild." After a particularly vicious day—seven months pregnant, she'd filed in on both the morning and drive-home shows, on top of her regular middy broadcast—Wright approached her boss, the station manager, and complained about being passed over three times. "I might as well have been about this situation if I could have a raise," she told him. He stared at her before turning her down. "Your husband makes good money," he said in way of explanation. Wright decided at that moment to leave the broadcast: "I recall I heard a huge crashing sound in my head, as if the Earth had opened up," she recalls now. "Too people are sometimes, but stupid people are stupid 24/7." Wright lasted for three shows that week and one of the three the following week. She subsequently went on maternity leave, on the last day possible while on leave, she resigned.

People don't usually leave in anger; they leave a bad boss, say workplace researchers Skarce, Jordan Evans and Beverly Kaye. Career counselors based in the U.S., Jordan Evans and Kaye conducted surveys about how bad bosses behave. The worst offense is belittling employees in front of others. Lying is next, followed by being condescending. What's at stake for many of these bosses is establishing, once and for all, that they are in charge.

Krista Malor\* of Vancouver recalls a boss she refers to as a "real gem." She was a manager at a movie theatre in Chilliwack, B.C., and he was prone to saying this. One day, the outburst was more pointed—and permanent



—than usual. Before she'd left the previous evening, Malor had forgotten to turn off an office light. The next morning, she discovered her supervisor had painted a message on the door: "Shut off the f—ing light KRISTA!" it read. Malor was forced to repaint the door to cover over his message before she could go on with her day. What was worse, he had left the light on!

Most bad boss behavior adds up to what Gary Namer, co-founder of a nonprofit organization devoted to addressing bad bosses, calls workplace bullying. The office is more bully-prone than ever before, says Namer, president of the Bellingham, Wash.-based Workplace Bullying and Trauma Institute. That's because the conditions that make a situation ripe for bullies are increasingly

common. With less management training and a revved-up work pace, supervisors are less patient. "To be a good manager takes longer than being a bad one," Namer says. "The shortest route to managing people is the cruelest route."

For Lucy Child\*, formerly a regional manager with a national not-for-profit agency, cruel was her boss's weapon of choice. He'd send screaming memos, three pages long, with bold typeface, red lettering, caps and multiple exclamation marks. "You can imagine morning tea when he has spent the year waiting for you to trip up," Child says, adding that 23 managers, including herself, left the organization in a three-year span. "You are alone in your office, and you are totally vulnerable. You get paralyzed, cowered and just don't bother to ever defend yourself. It's obvious. I had a colleague who called me to talk her through opening his email because she was afraid. She described it as seeing his name in the in-box and feeling lashed in the stomach even before she opened it."

Then there are the bosses who instill employees do the wrong thing. That happened to Jeff Davidson, who'd just gotten a new job as the HR department at a major bank. He got a call from his department head—a man he calls "a petty despot who was rude, dismissive and sarcastic"—who told Davidson to find a job for the husband of a director's secretary, a man who had been unemployed for seven years. "I said if he had something to offer, I would refer him on. The HR head then shouted, 'This is not a request! It is an order!'" Davidson met the man and, discovering he had psychological problems and was a drug and alcohol user, offered to arrange counseling, rather than a job. He then let his chief know what he'd had done. "He went nuclear, told me to pack my bag and get out—that he would be bringing for insubordination." Time passed, Davidson was not terminated. About a week later, the HR head told Davidson he was very busy, the director was grateful for the counseling he'd set up for the secretary's husband. But still, Davidson was not off the hook. "I was told the incident would not be forgotten and I had better watch my step."

Once employees have been targeted by a bullying boss, says Namer, they tend to lose their jobs. About 35 per cent leave voluntarily, and another 35 per cent are fired. "The end rule," he adds, "is to be targeted in the first place."

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## IT'S ALL IN THE PERKS

For many employees, work is not just about money



↑ Zircon workers enjoying the outdoor trails around their building. The company also features a 2,700-sq.-foot health centre and a beach volleyball pit.

## COMMUNITY GIVING

**SANKTEL**  
Regina | Approx. 3,800 employees  
Debbie Hunter is contacted almost every day by charitable organizations pleading for her help. The calls rarely go unanswered. That's because Hunter, SankTel's director of volunteers, heads up an army—70 per cent of the company's employees, their families, and about 1,500 others put in a whopping 75,000 volunteer hours last year.

"There are few places in Saskatchewan where people wouldn't have heard about the work we do," says Hunter, 38. "We focus heavily on education and technology but the lives of things we do and organizations that we work with is endless. We're everywhere."

SankTel didn't prove its philanthropic prowess in 2004 by donating \$2.6 million—split between more than 1,600 not-for-profit. An additional \$254,000 was raised by employees (an amount then matched at 38 per cent by SankTel). At this phone company, it's all about spreading the wealth.

## FAMILY MATTERS

## KORNIC INTERNATIONAL LTD.

Calgary | Approx. 300 employees  
When Sarah Penny returned from maternity leave to this environmental consulting firm last February, her idea was to ease back into her job. "Not everyone wants a 90-hour workweek when they have a young family at home, but considering, financially, has not been that open to flexible hours," says Penny, 32, who joined Kornic in 1999. "But my supervisor had told me to tell them how much I wanted—whether it be part-time work or just fewer hours. It was up to me." Penny—who had benefited from Kornic's maternity top-up payments during the first 15 weeks after her son Ivan's birth—took advantage of the company's phased-in return-to-work program for new parents, opting for a four-day workweek. Although the day off costs her 28 per cent of her pay, it affords her more time with Ivan, can down on day care costs, and provides a chance to get caught up on errands. "This way," she says, "the weekends we left for more family time."

## WORK/LIFE BALANCE

## SINCON ENERGY INC.

Calgary | Approx. 4,580 employees  
A full-time job as a manager of sustainable development and several volunteer commitments (for one thing, she's on the board of the Alberta Kooran Foundation) would leave little down time for most people. Luckily for Dianne Zimmerman, Sincon is uniquely generous with personal days—offering staff members 13 days a year (that's on top of regular paid vacation time). "These extra days recognize the complexity of our lifestyles," says Zimmerman, 35. "It's always a bit of a celebration when someone reporting to me is taking a personal day."  
Increasingly, more offices are considered valuable as money, if not more so. "Given the economic prosperity in Alberta especially, the fringe benefits and intangibles are becoming more important," says Zimmerman. "Dollar amount, but many people are placing greater value on other things. It's all about quality of life."

## HEALTHY WORKPLACE

## ZEVON ENVIRONMENTAL INC.

Oakville, Ont. | 1,470 employees  
If employees aren't working out to the company's 2,600-sq.-foot health centre, they're shooting hoops on the basketball court, sitting and spinning a ball on the beach volleyball pit, or taking a stress-reducing stroll through eight kilometres of backwoods trails. "We are an environmental company [Zevon is one of the world's leading manufacturers of water treatment systems used to purify drinking water and treat wastewater] and we have employees who are very health conscious," says Mike Theodorou, a systems development manager. "We want to support that as much as possible."

The gym in the company's headquarters in Oakville (330 employees) has 250 mirrors and features free weights, cardio machines and an area for aerobics. It runs yoga classes in the evenings and has a massage therapist and chiropractor available for appointments. But the healthy standard doesn't stop there: Zevon's full-service cafeteria offers two entries every day, one of which is billed as a health-wise choice. The food service is subsidized, so serves never cost more than \$3.99.

Zevon is also an active supporter of recreational sports, including seven beach volleyball teams. The company backs em-

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players' community sports teams, including softball, hockey and dragon boat racing. "It's great," says Thordarson. "Employees mingle and get to know others outside their departments."

#### EDUCATION & TRAINING

**VANOCVIER CITY SAVINGS CREDIT UNION**  
Vancouver | 1,800 employees  
It won't long after Ross Chang started at VanCity in 1996, just a year after getting a UTC commerce degree, that the questions started. "I really won't race where my co-workers were heading," says Chang, now 32. Hired as a financial services representative (a fairly weird for a seller), Chang had worked her way up to a senior FSR position, but she wanted more. Taking advantage of VanCity's innovative education program, Chang spent the next two years attending night classes and earned her Canadian securities certificate and certified financial planning designation, which led to a new role as a financial planner. The best part: her employer paid for the whole thing.

VanCity, Canada's largest credit union, operates a Web portal called DiscoverU, where employees can review 50 internal training and development programs and outside courses to figure out what might help advance their careers. For outside courses, like the ones Chang took, VanCity reimburses up to \$1,500 a year in tuition, as long as the employee receives a passing grade. Even if a course isn't directly related to a staff member's job, VanCity will still foot half the bill. "Tuition reimbursement was a huge motivating factor for taking the courses," says Chang. "And it definitely forces some sort of loyalty because they have made an investment in me."

#### SHARING THE WEALTH

##### WARDROP ENGINEERING INC.

Winnipeg | 620 employees  
Jake Alexander, 45, is at the top of his game. A metallurgical engineer, he joined Wardrop Engineering seven months ago, attracted by its small size and competitive compensation package. "Wardrop's whole business is dependent on high-calibre people with a lot of expertise and credibility, and that's a premium for that," says Alexander. "These compensation packages are geared to ensure employees are happy."

At Wardrop, a hard-working and productive engineer can earn as much as 25

## AND SO MUCH MORE

So what if the boss didn't want to shell out for plasma screens in every cubicle or wild-life massages. That's irrelevant to ease the question of perks at the end boardrooming in hopes of improving job satisfaction.



↑ More work if you can get it: Great Little Box Co. employees bring fun to Miraflores.

- There's a beer cart is wheeled through the office on Fridays to celebrate the end of the workweek. **Hill & Knowlton Canada**
- Keep the kids busy with on-site spring break and summer day-camp programs. **Seven Oaks General Hospital**
- Tuition rebates of up to 100 per cent for undergraduate and graduate courses. **University of Toronto**
- New hires get not leave top-ups of 50 per cent for 52 weeks while new grads get top-ups of 95 per cent for 37 weeks. **Toronto Hydro Corp.**
- Cash in by referring a friend. Ours up to

per cent over his or her base salary in performance bonuses. The system was set up four years ago amid fears of a looming workforce shortage. "The good performers are going to get paid more at Wardrop than they would anywhere else," says James Popel, the company's vice president of human resources. "It's a system set up to reward the best people."

While the incentives' bonuses are linked directly to the company's overall performance, professional employees—the bulk of Wardrop's staff—can elect to draw a nar-

#### PERKS: Coopers Inc.

- After four years on the job, take a month of paid sabbatical. **Black Media Inc.**
- Enjoy fresh fruit and candy—compliments of the world's largest corporate consumer of M&M's. **S&S Institute (Canada) Inc.**
- Each employee's name is entered into a monthly draw for prizes ranging from luxury car rentals to weekend getaways. **WaterhouseCoopers LLP**
- Pre-school daycare subsidy of up to \$7,500

#### perks: Coopers Inc.

- Get hitched while on the payroll and get an extra week of paid vacation, \$200, and a free honeymoon. **MIRA Gene Co.**
- Stay sharp by taking a course at the new \$58-million learning centre, Bank of Montreal
- Health benefits last forever—even after retirement. **Procter & Gamble Inc.**
- Firm offers \$5,000 for a down payment on a new home and also rebates your property taxes. **Cascades Inc.**

- If the company reaches its target for the year, the whole staff gets a paid vacation to places like Las Vegas or Mexico. **Great Little Box Co.**
- Family members get \$1,000 off the purchase or lease of a new vehicle. **Topcon Motor Manufacturing Canada Inc.**
- Enjoy movie nights with family and friends at the on-site 40-seat theatre. **Bionaire Corp.**
- Needs-based from the company's home-care service? They'll look after sick kids, spouses or elderly relatives. **Great & Young LLP**
- Celebrate the season with a Christmas bash for 30,000. **Dollarama Inc.**

row salary, with a base and overtime, or sign up for the bonus system, which guarantees a competitive base salary that's between 85 and 95 per cent of a target salary. Those who meet expectations collect the full target salary, and those who exceed the goals collect more. For the last fiscal year, more than 75 per cent of the professional staff exceeded their target salaries, and the company will be paying out more than \$3.5 million in bonuses. Now that's cashing in on success.

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# WHITE LIKE US

The socially progressive are shocked. 'We're colour-blind, for God's sake!'



**I USED TO THINK** I was colour-blind. Maybe that's why I didn't really notice that throughout childhood I never had a black doctor, dentist or teacher. I did, however, have black kids, Harriet Tubman, and I recall writing a high-minded little essay in Grade 6 to the effect that Canada was morally superior to the U.S. because slavery had never existed here. [It was years before I discovered that, in fact, it had, and was only formally abolished in 1834.]

Then, when I was 29, I spent the summer in an almost exclusively black area of Washington, where, after being smuggled and losing my apartment broken into twice, I was forced to conclude that, sadly, the minorities in my neighbourhood were not as colour-blind as I thought I was. They could see perfectly well that I was white, and probably had stuff worth stealing. My black neighbor laughed, not unkindly, when I expressed outrage that a smuggler had picked me—one of the race whose people—so rich, and told me she'd never had the luxury of being colour-blind.

I can't say I really understood what the racist until I began studying black history at university, where it was impossible not to notice I was the only white in my classes, or to pretend that the colour of my skin didn't influence how I was treated—or the way I felt about myself. Over time, I became accustomed to the not always friendly scrutiny of the other students and my professors. But my awareness of my own difference—which means, among other things, that I could not fly under the radar and slip class—did not go away. I learned to weigh my words carefully before opening my mouth (not a bad thing, in my case), and often felt, whether it was true or not, that I had to overcome expectations that white people were distinctly apathetic when it came to grasping the subtleties of the subject matter.

I'm not pretending to know what it feels like to be black, when I left the classroom, of course, the meanings attached to my

skin colour changed radically. But I did learn that when you're the visible minority, it's virtually impossible to be colour-blind. You can't simply forget how few people look like you.

That may be true even in a highly multi-cultural city like Toronto, where, on Oct. 8, black leaders joined under the umbrella of the Coalition of African Canadian Community Organizations to tell the city, via the front page of the *Toronto Star*, that they are not colour-blind—and no one else ought to be, either. This summer, amidst an explosion of gun violence, most of the dead were black men—and, the coalition added,

**SOME GROUPS, like francophones, already have separate services. For them, it's about creating a level playing field. But when it comes to blacks, it's segregation.**

blacks are dropping out of school in disproportionately high numbers. Blacks, they said, are in fact different from other minorities—more vulnerable, more oppressed by racism—and thus require a new set of separate services.

The coalition's wish list includes the creation of a provincial office of African Canadian affairs, an economic development agency, a diversion program for young blacks accused of minor crimes, and support for a black-focused school (the last item is controversial within the black community). Members also want funding set aside to social services programs for at-risk youth, and a return to gathering race-based

statistics for policing, education and employment, to gauge exactly what's going on in the city.

"Access to segregation," warned chieftest columnist in last Wednesday's *Globe and Mail*, because "separate is never equal." We're all in this multicultural melting pot together, was the message, and blacks were urged to join "the mainstream, in every sphere."

No doubt many would like to do just that, perhaps starting with jobs at the mainstream *Globe*, which has almost no black reporters or editors (nor does *Maclean's*). The reality is, while parts of Toronto's mainstream are highly diverse, there is truth in the coalition's argument that blacks have made less progress than other minorities. It is possible to walk through large residential areas—Forest Hill, say, or Leslie—without seeing a black face aside from the odd nanny, who may well live in a virtually all-black neighbourhood. And there are plenty of white-focused schools—they're called private schools—as well as virtually all-white private clubs.

These forests of segregation may not be intentional. But in their manner more or less harmful than the coalition's attempts to create a set of separate programs for poor blacks?

Some groups—francophones, aboriginals—already have separate services. "For them, it's all about creating a level playing field. But when it comes to blacks, it's segregation," Margaret Parsons, executive director of the African Canadian Legal Clinic, told the *Star*. But black separatism has different political and historical overtones, and it makes a lot of whites feel more guilty. And more put upon. Don't they get it? "We're colour-blind, for God's sake!"

Few blacks seem to appreciate such declarations. Perhaps that's because they hear only the noise of self-congratulation. "Racist! Not my fault!"

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Education | BY SASKIA BOURETTE



## BRING ON THE GEEKETTES

Educators insist a culture shift will lure females to sciences and math

**IN MAY**, while her friends were replaying an audiotape spoof of *Twilight* from Italy, Chae was glued to another screen. She was learning computer JavaScript at an all-girls science boot camp at the University of British Columbia. "Before this, I was very clueless about computers," the 12-year-old son snickered. "But it seemed that all the other girls were just as clueless as I was okay. If boys had been in the class, they probably would have just pushed us out of the way, saying they could do it better." You might think the pre-teenage kid was lifting the words right out of the most recent social research. The Grade 8

student unwittingly summed up what many educators and researchers already know: girls not only seem unimpressed but lack confidence in their ability to learn math, computers and science.

The aphorism? Pivotal to pursue careers in technology and science. Still, worries that initiatives to get girls excited by bytes, vectors and parabolas seemed to have been pushed to the back burner. Over the past few years, educators have been more concerned that boys have become the second sex, left behind by an education system that some

argue favours girls. But in January, the president of Harvard University shared the name of the educational debate: *and, in doing so, ranked women second on the list. Indeed, there was a collective gap in laboratories across North America after Lawrence Stern claimed girls are less likely to access the highest positions in math and science because of their "intrinsic attitude" and "lack of variability of aptitude." It was, political and academic history—not to mention something due to do.*

science. A reminder, according to Toronto's Maria Kline, Princeton's dean of engineering, of the prejudices many women believed were in the science minor.

Kline, who got her B.Sc. and Ph.D. in mathematics at the University of Alberta, says that once she recovered from the shock of Summers' comments—which he later tried to smooth over—she rolled in his message, because it put the issue of the math and science gender gap back on the social agenda. "I'm sure there are a lot of people who think the same thing [as Summers]," Kline explains. "But they wouldn't be so clueless as to say it. The reality is that the current is still blowing against women to be successful in these areas."

Certainly, the numbers aren't encouraging. Female first-year enrolment at Ontario's 13 engineering schools has dropped to

Life and health insurance. Under School biology class with friends. (credit)



24 per cent, down from almost 30 per cent five years ago. And in August, at a meeting of the American Sociological Association in Philadelphia, researchers presented a paper that indicated women continue to lag behind men globally in science-related fields. The authors had crunched data on degrees awarded in 2001, compiled by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Examining seven fields of study, including engineering, math and physical sciences, they found women tend to preponderate in fields such as health and education. In computer science, females were under-represented in all 21 of the industrialized countries studied. Still, the researchers found great variance from country to country. In the United States, males were overrepresented in computer science by a ratio of slightly more than two to one, in the Czech Republic, by more than six to one. "The ubiquity of women's under-representation attests to the persistence of deep-seated and widely shared beliefs that men and women are naturally different and they are suited for different occupations," the authors wrote. "But the fact that there's so much cross-national variability suggests that there's lots of room for country-specific cultural and social influences to play out."

Social influences outweighed aptitude in another study released in February. The paper, published in *Current Research in Social Psychology*, showed that girls who read biographies of successful women before taking a difficult math test scored as well as their male colleagues. Women who didn't read the biographies scored poorly compared to men.

These papers are just the latest research in a large body of social science supporting the theory that culture is more important than chromosomes in women's math and science achievement. Much of the current thinking also supports the notion that girls learn better in a co-operative and non-hierarchical environment. Girls often tend to see subjects like physics as too isolating a career choice, and they are more inclined to stay interested in science if they can use its practical application and how it might be used to help other people. Based on these precepts, many educators over the past decade have redesigned both their pedagogy and their curriculum—from grade school to grad school—to help help girls understand the sciences.

This new thinking played out perfectly

on a recent Friday afternoon at the London School, a mid-west Toronto private school for girls that offers enriched courses in math and science. A gaggle of Grade 11 biology students in jeans, T-shirts and brightly coloured bracelets were seated at their lab stations, fidgeting another round a table.



Their assignment? To discuss the question, "What makes us human?" Following a few moments of awkward silence, a

Precocious Klawe with 600 letters this summer at a Microsoft conference.

Columbia, where she was dean of science from 1996 to 2002, with the goal of getting more women interested in computer science. The result? Female enrollment in the discipline has inched upward every year. The percentage of female students in combined biology and computer science degrees at UBC is now 42 per cent, compared with 22 per cent of women in computer science five years ago.

Whether Dawn Brada smiled knowingly, the lesson was running smoothly as planned. The girls were engaging one another and learning from a real life example to explore one of science's most profound questions: "These girls need to know that if they do pursue science," says Insall, "it's not just learning about oil division, but it really is a community effort that involves working closely with a whole group of people."

A similar evolution is taking place on university campuses across North America. The newest computer geeks are also Renaissance men—and increasingly women. A number of universities are developing new interdisciplinary courses, allowing students to combine "hard sciences" with other disciplines. To address the decline in female enrollment in engineering programs in Ontario, schools offering the program have

added biology, a subject girls often prefer, to the list of course options, and they're promoting engineering to high schoolers as being as humanistic as the health sciences. Princeton's Klawe has become the forefront of the movement. She redesigns a number of programs at the University of British

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# SEX, SPIES AND BETHUNE'S SECRET

She was a dancer—tall, Swedish and beautiful—and she was the real reason Bethune had to get out of Spain, as MICHAEL PETROU reveals for the first time

**EARLY IN 1936**, as the Spanish Civil War raged around the besieged city of Madrid and explosions rumbled in nearby streets, a strangely beautiful woman walked into the headquarters of the Spanish Canadian Blood Transfusion Unit and asked to speak with its director, Canadian doctor Norman Bethune. The woman said her name was Kaja and claimed to be a Swedish journalist. She was thin, with a small face and long, strawberry-blond hair. She stood nearly six feet tall and swooned over the doctor she had come to interview. But the two felt a connection and disappeared into a bedroom for two days. Bethune's young niece, Titi Allen, stumbled upon the pair naked in bed. Occasionally, Bethune emerged to make his rounds. He said the journalist was conducting an in-depth interview.

Kaja stayed at the blood transfusion unit for weeks, perhaps months. But she was not the only journalist to visit Bethune. The doctor treated many reporters, and his fame grew. Canadians, reading about his exploits in their own newspapers, were entranced. There was one of their own, a romantic rogue who formed blood throughout the besieged city of Madrid, where the fascist army pounded at the gates and civilian soldiers armed with hunting rifles and Mauser cocktles kept them out. The reds delivering blood were emblazoned with the name "Casimira." Casimira at home had never seen such sweet forever before, and they lived it. Thousands sent money.

But Bethune left Spain abruptly in early April, 1937. Two years later, he died in China of blood poisoning, arriving with Miss Zindaghi's Communist English Route Army, which was fighting the Japanese

who had invaded their country. The Canadian doctor became a national hero in China and, much later, in Canada as well. Schools and colleges are named after Bethune. Last year, CBC viewers voted him the 26th greatest Canadian of all time.

Despite Bethune's global profile, the details of his time in Spain, where he first became internationally famous, remain shrouded in mystery. Specifically, why did he leave Spain, a country he once called "the centre of the world," in its darkest hour, with Madrid surrounded by fascist troops and the outcome of the civil war still undecided?

Titi Allen's book revealed the answer to a mystery that has been hidden for more than 60 years, locked up in the secret archives of the Soviet Communist International. Norman Bethune did not choose to leave Spain. He was forced out by officials in the Spanish government who accused him of treachery and espionage, and of conspiring with a traitor and suspected fascist—the Swedish blood journalist and dancer who was his lover.



Norman Bethune in 1937

In 1936, a Spanish general named Francisco Franco, backed by the armed might of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, led a military



rebellion against Spain's democratically elected, left-leaning government. The revolt began near July in Spanish Morocco and spread across mainland Spain. But in much of the country the people resisted. They threw up barricades and crushed spending tanks into army machine-gun nests. They halted the coup d'état, and Spain was plunged into civil war.

For thousands of Canadians suffering through years of economic depression, Spain became a beacon. Fascists were doing nothing to stop it. Benito Mussolini marched unopposed into Abyssinia in North Africa. Adolf Hitler was calling Spanish Jews in Germany Britain, the United States and France sought only to appease them. But in Spain—basically—workers, farmers, liberals, democrats, anarchists and Communists had made a stand. Eventually, some 40,000 volunteers from all over world, including 1,600 Canadians, flocked to Spain to fight for the Spanish government.

Most Canadians in Spain came from the ranks of those hit hard early the Great Depression. Some 80 per cent were unskilled or Canadian. Almost all were poor. They had spent years riding across

Kaja (next to Bethune) stayed with the blood unit in Spain for weeks.

the country stop-paying because in search of work in relief camps and on road crews and farms, sleeping in hobo jungles and urban flophouses. Fighting in Spain offered these Canadians both a way out and a chance to fight back.

Norman Bethune was different.

He came from a wealthy family. By 1935, he was already a renowned thoracic surgeon and something of a deity on the Marxist social scene, even though he was both a committed leftist and a devout Communist. But Bethune was infatuated with Franco in Canada. Eliza Stee, a Canadian architect who had been living in London and who worked closely with Bethune in Spain, said that prior to the war, Bethune was "a man with a load of copperware, an arrogant man contemptuous of a society that seemed indifferent to suffering that he believed could be eradicated by political and economic means."

Bethune was craggy to see his patients leave the hospital healthy, only to fall ill again because of the grinding poverty in which they lived. He believed that in Spain people were fighting for a society where this would change. Desperate to get there, he appealed to friends for money and he offered his services to the Red Cross, without success. Eventually, Bethune got money from the Communist

## THE TRUTH ABOUT BETHUNE'S DEPARTURE WAS CONCEALED FOR DECADES BY THE COLD WAR

to Aid Spanish Democracy, a fundraising and lobby group run by members of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and the Communist Party of Canada. Graham Spey, a leading member of the CCF, was his contact at the committee.

Before sailing from Quebec City and arriving in Madrid on Nov. 3, 1934—the eve of France's offensive against the Spanish capital. Waiting for the doctor was Hanning Sorenson, a Danish born Canadian who had gone to Spain as a newspaper correspondent, and had expressed Sore's he would research the republic's medical needs.

while he was in Madrid. Soriano was a leftist, but he was also a perpetually curious type, always seeking out new things to learn and experience. "Maybe I was an adventurer," he said many years later. "Maybe I was bored, needed some excitement. I was not born a priest."

Sorrensen had hoped to show Echevarria around Madrid. For the next few days, the two visited various hospitals to find out if Echevarria could join their staff. None of the doctors could give Echevarria more than vague commitments, and eventually had to come back later. At one point, Echevarria was offered a job at a military base, but he decided he didn't like the man in charge. "I couldn't work with that bastard," he told Sorrensen. "Let's not cut out here."

It is possible that in the chaos of a city under attack, Bethune was simply unable to find a hospital or medical service that could make use of his skills. But it is also likely that he wanted an assignment with a higher profile and more potential for fame. All those who knew Bethune in Spain describe him as passionate and vain, with tremendous energy and little patience. Sansonetti recalls Bethune complaining: "You don't give me enough importance when you introduce me."

Bethune eventually found his purpose while sitting across a small table from Governor as the pair travelled by rail to Valence. "Herring, I've got it!" he said, slapping the table with his hand as the train creaked and rolled across a landscape covered with grape vines and olive trees. Bethune described a blood transfusion

service that would bring blood to soldiers at the front. Previously, wounded soldiers needing blood would wait for hours or days, until they could be transported over broken roads to hospitals far behind the lines. Often they would bleed to death on the way.

The pair quickly got approval from Spanish officials and from the Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, which was funding their mission. Then, joined by Sore, they established their headquarters in Madrid and began supplying desperately needed blood to soldiers and civilians in the war-torn city and surrounding



Between, operating in Spain, pioneered the delivery of blood to troops at the front

backgrounds. Beltrami even made maps so the work could be done as efficiently as possible.

The Spanish government had already made remarkable advances in blood transfusion work since the outbreak of the conflict. But Bethune crucially perceived the value of imaging blood where it was needed. His blood transfusion unit was mobile, which made all the difference in saving lives. And in a city under siege, the very act of donating blood gave Madrid's citizens an opportunity to show their solidarity with the soldiers protecting them. The blood transfusion unit became a symbol of their defiance.

But problems soon developed at the unit's headquarters. Ted



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Allen, who first knew Berthaux in Montreal, says that when he arrived at the unit early in 1937, the doctor was beginning to unravel. Berthaux told his wife friend that a couple of lay opportunists or even Franco sympathizers were working with him—and that he had resorted to Scotch whisky as a means of dealing with them. "Those were men I had loved him because he had been truly magnificent. Those were times I loved him because he hadn't measured up to my ideal here," Allen wrote years later. "I also remembered the night when Berthaux, reassured by the doctor with whom he'd had all the problems, gulped four straight whiskies, got drunk and smashed his fist through the front door window."

With the blood transfusion track to Montreal, tests show his cell was

Problem intensified in March 1937, as the Spanish Republic government recognized and took control of the money and his groups that had hitherto flourished in the chaos of the war's early months, including the Canadian blood transfusion unit. Berthaux resented from the government-imposed control and bureaucracy, which changed his style and saw-sawing. He left the unit for days at a time. He fought with top military brass. His second as authority. He drank. Despite all this, four of the doctors who worked with him in Spain later remembered Berthaux with great respect. He was brave to the point of recklessness. And his conviction about the anti-fascist cause was beyond reproach.

But on April 15, 1937, Berthaux wrote a letter of resignation to the chief military health, in which he said he was leaving because the

blood transfusion unit was now functioning well under Spanish control, and he was no longer needed. "In view of the fact that the Instituto Hispánico-Canadiense de Transfusion de Sangre is recognized by me in January is now operating in an efficient, well-organized institute, and as part of the Spanish Militia, it is clear to me that my function as chief of the organization here in Spain has come to a natural end," the letter said.

Over the years many have questioned this version of events. It made little sense that Berthaux would choose to leave Spain with war still raging around him. But the truth about Berthaux's departure was concealed for decades by the Cold War.

**THE SOVIET** Union, through the Communist International and national Communist parties around the world, inspired and funded the international volunteers who fought in Spain—even though many of the volunteers were not Communists themselves. Moscow also recruited enormous aid convoys over the Spanish government, though members who belonged to the Communist Party of Spain. Berthaux's blood transfusion unit contained a Communist cell, and the doctor himself was a member of the group.

When the war ended, hundreds of thousands of documents pertaining to foreigners in Spain, including files on Berthaux, were shipped away to Moscow, where they remained locked and hidden from Western scholars for more than 50 years. Those archives have now been opened. Together with the archived diaries of Hector Saez and Hector Sorenson, they reveal the true story of Norman

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## 'WE ALWAYS OBSERVED HIS GREAT INTEREST IN GOING TO THE FRONT,' A REPORT NOTED

Both his departure from a country he didn't want to leave, and a war he would have fled fighting.

The first hint of serious trouble between Berthane and Spanish authorities came in the dinner of June and the personal papers of September. On April 8, 1937, Sjö wrote in his diary: "Got both to agree to get out." A similar day-by-day reflection by Sjömen confirms that on the same date, "We persuaded Berth to leave." Berthane did leave Spain a few weeks later. But he wanted to come back. In May, he tried to return to establish a home for orphans, but he was stopped by Spanish authorities and his Canadian co-workers. By July, Berthane was so determined and desperate to return that he planned to join the International Brigades, a fighting unit, at the advanced age of 47.

But Communist authorities in the Spanish government did not want Berthane to come back.

A Spanish official named Juan Alcántara wrote to his superiors and explained why Berthane must be kept out of the country at all costs. The contents of this letter have never before been published. Alcántara wrote that Berthane had been expelled from Spain "in a direct way," with co-operation from his Canadian co-workers, so as not to jeopardize funding from thousands of Canadians who were sending money to support Berthane's translation unit. Alcántara then listed Berthane's alleged crimes.

"For being immoral, among other things, he frequently got drunk and was never in a condition to lead a mission in delicate or blood-stained situations."

"He took jewellery under the pretext that he was going to hand them over... and then said he would sell it in Paris to raise funds for the resistance, without anyone knowing to date what he did with these objects."

"He happily squandered money without thinking that it came from the solidarity that the Canadian proletariat was showing to Spain and that in many cases that involved collecting cost by cost."

"We always observed his great interest in going to the front wherever there were operations, but never with the good purpose of making translations."

Here Alcántara levels his most damning accusation against Berthane:

"There is much suspicion that Berthane may be a spy according to a report that is already in the Central Committee of our Party and in the Headquarters of Military Police," he wrote. Alcántara finishes his report by noting that Berthane had frequent talks with a "suspect" woman he identifies as "Dina," but was, in fact, Kajsa, Berthane's Swedish lover.

Kajsa's name appears on another document, first uncovered by historian Larry Hiestand. An unnamed Spanish official suggested Kajsa might be a spy because she made unauthorised trips to the front lines, where she gathered material for detailed military-style maps—an accusation he made against Berthane as well. The report's author also implied Kajsa had loose morals.

It is tempting to think that this Spanish official might have been simply taken back by the Swedish woman's laxen confidence and overt sexuality, and consequently felt justified suggesting she might be a spy. But a report on Kajsa appears more ominously in a file kept by the Servicio de Investigación Militar, the feared Spanish secret police who ultimately arrested the Swedes and who carried out numerous clandestine arrests and murders of politically "suspicious" individuals. She was identified by the full name of Kajsa Helen Berthman and was described as a former opera diva, a former governess in Sweden and wife a "libertine"—a label synonymous with being a traitor in the eyes of the Spanish security



After his left, Berthane tried to return before but was turned back.

services. In many ways, doubt about her loyalty remained, but secret police files said that she "had relations with fascist circles in Valencia and Barcelona."

Kajsa Berthman was, in fact, neither a spy nor a governess, but an entertainer and dancer who toured Europe before her Spanish war and left her penniless. She was working in Spain as a travel agent when the war broke out, and subsequently turned to journalism. But none of this mattered in the time. Spanish authorities viewed her as a possible traitor. And their knowledge of Berthane's intimate relations with the beautiful Swede would have cast the

# KAJSA'S SECRET POLICE FILE NOTED SHE 'HAD RELATIONS WITH FASCIST CIRCLES'

were dark cloud of suspicion on himself.

The Canadian doctor was already politically suspect because of his maps, his drinking and, most likely, his career. Berthone's relations with Kajsa sealed his fate.

The more serious allegations made against Berthone, however, are rubbish. He is accused of spying, based on the flimsy logic that he made detailed maps of the front lines, taking careful note of distances and travel times. But Berthone's job was to get blood to the front as quickly as possible—if come he wanted detailed maps. Lives depended on it. And his lover, Kajsa Berthone, was not a secret agent. When Franco's forces won the war, she did not welcome them but fled the country with hundreds of thousands of Spaniards who feared Franco's reprisals. She found refuge in Mexico and died there 30 years later.

As for Berthone, he loved Spain and cared deeply for its fight against Franco. But in the end he was a victim of the anti-spy paranoia that swept the country in the midst of its civil war. He was passionate, vain, and possibly drunk. But his only crimes were obsessing over how to get blood to dying soldiers as quickly as possible, and filling for a beautiful and exotic woman.

It is likely Berthone's co-workers knew Spanish authorities suspected he was a spy. But they understood the doctor had to leave Spain. His longstanding independence, passion, and courage for authority—the very personality traits that allowed him to flourish in the chaos of Madrid under siege—caused Berthone to flourish when he became a cog in a much larger military bureaucracy.

Along with their Spanish hosts, Berthone's co-workers somewhere along the way could not outright expel Berthone without risking losing funding from Canada. They shrewdly conspired to remove Berthone from Spain "in a clever way," as Alcantara said, with a minimal amount of negative publicity and without revealing the real reasons he had to go. That the circumstances of his departure remained hidden for more than 60 years, and that Berthone himself was ignorant of the machinations against him, indicates how successful they were.

**SPAIN** left Berthone drained and emotionally crushed. In a letter to his ex-wife, he called the country "a scar on my heart." Clearly it was a scar that never healed. Berthone said twice to come back—and failed both times.

But the Spanish Civil War also intensified Berthone's almost



In a letter to his ex-wife, Berthone called Spain "a scar on my heart."

personal vendetta against fascism. Six months after leaving Spain, as he prepared to leave for China, Berthone wrote a farewell letter to "Eliabeth," a former lover. It seems he was mentally preparing himself for a final and possibly fatal mission. "My road ahead is a strange and dangerous one," he wrote. "You cannot enter with me. I don't want to attempt to any time—and in my own life—any serious emotional engagement. I am through with such things. Now you can think about me fondly and sweetly. Do so. I loved you once. I have great affection for you now. Remember me to all I will you—with affection and respect." ■

Michael Pinsky is writing a doctoral thesis at the University of Oxford on Canadians in the Spanish Civil War.

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**WESTJET**

# THE CUPS RUNNETH OVER

What to do about all those Tim Hortons containers littering the countryside?

**THERE ARE FAR BIGGER** environmental problems than everyday litter: global warming, decimated fish stocks, deforestation. But litter, somehow, manages to get under people's skin in ways the others don't. A year ago, a Tim Hortons franchise opened in St. Andrews, N.B., and excoriated them the chain's first possible coffee cups have been a blight on the quaint seaside resort town. Larry Lack, a local organic farm inspector, says the only way to put a end to the mess is to "implement a deposit-return system for all throw away coffee

cups. The province already has one in place for wide variety of beverage containers, including beer bottles and pop cans. So, Lack reasons, why not charge folks a few cents each when they pick up their morning jolt of jive? To get his message across, Lack, 63, collects Tim cups on highways with his dog, and estimates he now has as many as 500. "It's a problem," he says, "that goes far beyond its tiny constituency. 'Everywhere I've been, I've seen Tim Hortons cups all over the place,'" says Lack. "You'll see them in lignite, you'll see them on 'olde blinde."

Lots of businesses sell coffee in disposable cups, and lots of people who drink that coffee don't give a second thought about chucking them out the car window. But Tim is the largest at what it does in Canada, and that makes the Dubuik, Ont.-based behemoth a big target. As an independent-run division of Wendy's International Inc. of Dublin, Ohio, Tim Hortons operates 2,500 outlets in Canada and 270 in the U.S. last year, the company reported almost \$1 billion in revenue. Greg Skinner, a Tim Hortons spokesman, says the chain already recycles cups in the Maritimes and is willing to talk to anyone about doing likewise elsewhere. But a deposit-return system isn't in the cards. "It's a tax, and we don't see a tax as a way of stopping litter," says Skinner. "The key is education, letting people know that it's unacceptable."

Maritime newspapers have jumped all over Lack's story, while the New Brunswick Solid Waste Association plans to press his case

with the provincial Department of the Environment. In September, the Sierra Club of Canada said it supports his idea. It helps



**THOSE** critics who favour instituting a system of deposits on the cups base their argument on a solid principle: money talks

and the coffee is gone. Tim goes beyond the anecdotal. A study in Nova Scotia that looked at litter in that province's ditches and roadways found that Tim Hortons accounted for 22 per cent of identifiable trash. McDonald's, at 10 per cent, was a distant second, notes conservationist Mark Durrick, the Halifax-based spokesman for the Sierra Club's Atlantic chapter. "The Tim Hortons cup," Durrick says, "is only the No. 1

recognizable mass of litter in the country." In July, Tim launched an anti-littering campaign in Atlantic Canada. But that sort of thing doesn't work as well as when people are forced to pony up their own cash, argues David Coon, policy director for the Conservation Council of New Brunswick, an environmental protection group. Consumers in the province now pay either a 10-cent or 20-cent deposit, depending on the size of the beverage container.

On 10-cent deposits, consumers get five cents back when they return the item to be recycled. The other half is split equally between industry, which uses it to pay for the recycling, and the provincial government's Environment Trust Fund, which supports various green projects. Since 1992, the N.B. Solid Waste Association estimates that recycling has kept more than one billion containers from crowding its landfills or marauding the landscape. "You'd be hard pressed to ever see a pop can, beer bottle or juice box lying on the side of the road anywhere in the province," Coon says. "The recycling rates are phenomenal."

After more than 15 years to the landfill business, Don Harrington, general manager of New Brunswick's Southwest Solid Waste Commission, wonders whether we've got it all wrong. Why, for example, do consumers who buy reusable mugs pay the same tax as those who buy disposables destined for burial in a dump? "In the grand scheme of things, is

that what we want to continue to do?" asks Harrington, adding that people will do the right thing only if their money talks. "A deposit system for coffee cups may be the answer, it may not be. All it's trying to do is get to be more of a financial incentive to moderate the behaviour of the masses." Right now, there isn't.

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# SINNERS IN CYBERSPACE

Log on and unburden your conscience, or find out about others' misdeeds

*I currently am studying medicine at university, and am unable to afford to pay rent. Outside the food bank one night I met a man who offered me accommodation for no money—the catch: I live at his home and provide sexual services to him. He expects me to do nothing else—the clean the house, he normally does the cooking and laundry, although I try to help where I can, and he is really good when it comes to my workload and exams. He pays for my usual contraception, and even gives me a cleaning and study allowance. I am expected to tell people that I am boarding with him, and do house and office cleaning for him. He is not a bad*

sort, but as OK with your personality. I've met some shybidi too, as I assume there are plenty of single women out there that would love him. While I don't love him, I am kind of neutral with the arrangement—I am not overjoyed, but I am not disgruntled. Confused and debated maybe.

—Anonymous 22-year-old woman from New Zealand posting on reddit.com

'Little annoyances make me want to mail/kill people'—I want to disembowel them with a rusty hook'

**IT USED TO BE** that those seeking solace for their sins would have to go to a Catholic church, appear into a cramped table and confess to priest. Other might turn to a spiritual leader in another faith—or even a sympathetic therapist to relieve their guilt. But in today's wired world, a damn conscience—or, at least, a less troubled one—just a few key strokes away. In recent years, a number of confession websites have appeared, and there's no shortage of people logging on to unburden their souls. But based on the number of hits the sites are getting, it seems many more people are visiting to read about the misdeeds of others.

All the websites offer anonymity—electronic intimacy without consequences. And the confessions cover a wide gamut of emotions, psychological issues, behaviors and relationships. Some are mundane or boring. Recent visitors to Naprowd.com—where one

can choose from among the seven daily story-paired these messages under the glib, story headings: "I just ate 15 Camembert cheeses," "I ate the pizza burner last night, out of the trash at 4 a.m.," "Most of my friends know me as a vegetarian but when I feel depressed I sit at home in my underwear eating slices of salmon and bolognaise." Another site, Graphix.us, there's also "I am secretly rigged the thermostat, so that my roommate can't lower the temperature. She used to tell me that it was freezing cold."

But not everything through postings from a single site. Of course, it's easy to feel distance for others' behavior. Under Naprowd's anger heading, there's this recent admission: "One time, a bum came up to my car while I was stopped at a red light. He asked me for change. I proceeded to pull out a handful of change and throw it into the busy intersection. Quite possibly one of the cruelest things I've ever done." Another Naprowd visitor wrote this under "prick": "I didn't give a shit about the union at work until a co-worker of mine decided to run for it last week. I hate the guy, goddamn know-it-all. No way I was going to let him get votes while I sit around idly. While he was off Thursday and Friday, I launched my own campaign, and when he comes back

'I go to a site and pretend to be a woman interested in lesbianism, but I'm just a chubby guy who can't get laid'

Monday, he'll find me totally staring." Other postings on the various sites are disturbingly graphic, as when people recount self-destructive binges, or revealing language revealing their lust or sexual escapades.

In the same time, many who confess give small glimpses into their lives, longings and vulnerabilities, and it's hard not to feel at least some empathy. Click on "arrry" at Naprowd, and there's a listing of everyone's feelings about others' looks, sexual desires and wealth. But then this admission from a 30-year-old steps you in your tracks: "Terry the people who don't have silverware like me." Or this from a small-town resident: "I envy the lesbians who can walk down the street holding hands. I envy. I know too many people in my town and would get my ass beat." The following cathartic rant appears under the "stupid" heading: "I hate how there's poor people and rich people... I hate the media, and I'm tired of being told that I have to have [get rich] if I'm popular, you have to be 'gangster' and the slut of the world... I hate Paris Hilton."

Not surprising, there is a frequent topic, with many confessing to betrayal and duplicity. "I lied to you," writes a Naprowd visitor. "I'm sleeping around with him. I

'One time, a bum came up to my car while I was stopped at a red light. He asked me for change. I proceeded to pull out a handful of change and throw it into the busy intersection. Quite possibly one of the cruelest things I've ever done.'



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## FASHION(S)ISTAS

The three Beckermans draw inspiration from Salvador Dali, and Amelia Earhart

**IT'S MID-AFTERNOON** in the dimly lit downtown lounge of Toronto's Drake Hotel, home to the city's hipster set. Samantha and Calliana Beckerman—identical 25-year-old twins who, along with their sister Chloe, 32, are the creative force behind the much-hyped new fashion label, Beckerman—are sitting on low stools in front of the stage. Compter and impressively bubbly, the Toronto-born siblings are watching intently as impossibly slender teenage girls silently glide and clomp across the floor.

"Amazing! Beautiful!" one twin says. "Would you mind trying that lace fascinator?" says the other, wrinkling her nose. Today, the designers are looking for something very specific: models who are extremely tall, have very long hair and, most important, walk with enough cheek to pull off the creations in their spring/summer 2006 collection—a seasonal passion to surrealism.

This week, the label's Salvador Dali-inspired second collection, called "Poesia

of a Dali Girl," is set to open Toronto's 30th annual C'Oréal Fashion Week. The designs, inspired by flight, travel and madcap dreamscapes, are a lovely combination of vividly coloured velvets and raw silks, gown with hand-lentured corsets and knotted skirts, and pieces embellished with an obscene number of ribbons and pom-poms. ["We're trying to make lacemore sexy," says Samantha—a naïve

if distinctly Canadian punner.] The clothes are playful, girly and a little offbeat, and the fashion critics can't get enough of them.

In September, during New York City's fashion week, the Beckermans' stores staged as the stars of the "Fresh Faces in Fashion" show, an event sponsored by the organization Gen Art that has launched the careers of industry darlings including Rebecca Taylor and Zac Posen. The New York Times called Beckerman the only standout among a group of young designers showcased with ruffled blooms and linen

shorts. "[They had] the fabulous audacity to trim a lace bra with long crink and copper ribbons," one critic gushed, "like a stripper bursting through a car wash."

"It's important when you have

Along with sister  
Chloe, Samantha  
and Calliana  
have won races

a fashion show to really bring it, to make pieces that are just so eventful," says Callianno, who is dressed in a bright red ruffled-throated sweater, navy warm-up pants, and bright red vintage Burberry-soles sneakers. "When people come to a show, they exist to have a good time. Our is really theatrical and crazy."

That Dali Girl collection is a reworking of seemingly disparate themes. For starters, the items drew on their own otherworldly dreams, prompted by the "vampire" books they love. "We live over two bars in New York," says Callianno, "and they're maybe the busiest bars in the city. We hear people all the time, so there's no point going to bed." On an average night, they'll work on their designs until 5 a.m., then highball over again before noon.

Then there's the women's mutual fascination with the visage of Amelia Earhart, the early-20th-century aviator. "We watched this documentary about her that was interposed entirely through the passport she sent back home to her family and friends," says Callianno.

"We were only blown away by all the things she saw and the journals that she kept."

Merely, their new collection is an homage to her: flowers, experimental patterns and photographs, including Dali, Benetton and Jean-Michel Basquiat. "We went to the Jacques exhibit in Brooklyn, and the clothes were so vivid and crazy," says Callianno. "Lots of graphic inspiration—surrealist and free like what we do in our journals. It's really what's going on in our minds right now."

Then a marketing perspective, when you're trying to cut it in the commercial world of fashion, it doesn't have to be one of blood-bathed, blue-eyed women who embody their own quirky aesthetic. Samantha and Callianno have fed off of each other's creative whimsy their whole lives. When they speak, it's a sort of conversational ping-pong match.

Callianno: "We've always been drawing and designing."

Samantha: "...going to Fabrikand, making people's dresses for retail brands..."

Callianno: "...fashioning our own. I used to send my sketches to Seventeen magazine. One of them got published when I was about 12. It was on the 'Reader Mail' page. I was like, 'yes!'"

At meetings, they attended Toronto's posh Brunkow Hall, one of the few high schools



A Beckerman design on view in March, the three in New York City last month



to offer classes in fashion design. "We took them and they wouldn't let us take them any more," says Samantha. In 2006, they moved to New York to study design at the Fashion Institute of Technology. Their graduating thesis collection won two awards and media attention from *Elle*, *NYLON* and *Women's Wear Daily*. They appeared under heavyweights including Oscar de la Renta, Giorgio Armani and Marc Jacobs before joining forces with younger sister Chloe, an artist who is currently studying at FIT, to launch their own, spontaneous line in early 2005. Rounding out the family business is their father, a marketing expert who helps with

publicity and number crunching, and "manager mom," who helps in all aspects of decision-making.

Beckerman's first collection, called "Don't Worry, Be Happy," debuted during fashion week in Toronto last spring and won a collector for its blend of modern style with textured knitwear and traditional Guatemalan fabrics and worry dolls. Canada's *Vibe* magazine recently began carrying their line, which will soon be available in boutiques across the U.S.

"Creatively, we really push each other in everything we do," says Callianno. "It's not so much that we inspire, inspire, please each other. We started a dog sweater company as well, Cuddly Couture, while we were in school, because we couldn't find any cute enough dog sweaters."

"Puppy sweats" was Samantha. "We have two Pomeranians."

"So loosely, what we did was to get on the sewing machines," says Callianno, "fleece them back to back and see who could make..."

Instantly, unions "...the exact dog sweater!"

Chloe is more of a traditionalist. "She thinks differently than us," says Callianno. "She designs evening, prints. She always puts owners together that love and I wouldn't necessarily choose, and she's almost always right."

Right now, the trio says they're toying with a mood, a certain lightness in the air. "I can feel like there's this huge air phase going on right now," says Callianno. "We were in New York when 9/11 happened and it seemed the crap out of everyone. The whole party and fashion scene in New York totally died out after that."

"And this year it actually feels like the energy is used to have in starting up again. The clubs, the parties are going," says Samantha. "And everyone's feeling from it," says Callianno, building on her sister's analytical assessment.

"That's exactly it," says Samantha, nodding emphatically. "We want to have a great time. It's all about fun and happiness. And dreams."

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### THE LAY OF THE LAND

Together, China's Guangdong province, Hong Kong and Macao form the Greater Pearl River Delta Economic Zone, an area poised to become one of the most prosperous and dynamic economic centres in the world. In 2004, Canada's trade ties with the region totalled about US\$8 billion.

This special economic zone will be bolstered by the Mainland-Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement, or CEPA, launched in January 2004. A NAFTA-like free trade agreement, CEPA and two successive updates have removed tariffs from more than 1,000 Hong Kong products entering China as well as introducing preferential access to the Mainland market for services in 26 major industries and sectors.

Many Canadian and other overseas companies are currently seeking ways to benefit from CEPA, by setting up operations in Hong Kong, partnering with a Hong Kong company, or even acquiring firms with experience in the China market.

Furthermore, the Chinese government has recently combined the two concepts – regional trading zones and duty-free access – into a long-range plan to develop a South China common market. The result was the Pan-Pearl River Delta Regional Co-operation and Development Forum, dubbed Pan-PeRD or simply "9+2" because it links nine provinces in southern China together with Guangdong and the two Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macao.

Pan-PeRD encompasses a population of some 450 million people – roughly equal to that of major trade blocs such as NAFTA, the expanded 35-member European Union or ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations). The Pan-PeRD's combined 2003 GDP was US\$630 billion or approximately 40% of China's total output.

Coming to TV sets this fall on Rogers OMNI 2 will be a five-part documentary series, *The Hong Kong Connection*.

Canada and the *New China*. Shot on location in Hong Kong, Canada and China, each 30-minute episode will bring to life topics such as business opportunities, and Canadian success stories as well as an inside look at the culture, everyday lives of people and historic sites – visual links that will help reconnect the more than one million Canadians of Chinese background to their roots and origins. The series will also pay particular attention to Hong Kong's crucial role as gateway, meeting place and cockpit



involved with the movement of people, products and ideas between and among the three places. After the initial broadcast, the series will be available on other cable networks across Canada as well on DVDs and Web broadcasts.

"What we are trying to portray," says series on-camera host, Tony Wong, "is the greatest shift in the global economy this century. And Canada with its immense personal ties to both Hong Kong and China is sitting on the doorstep of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I just hope that the series can draw people's eyes so they can take advantage of what's happening over there."

### THE CANADIAN CONNECTION

Why is Hong Kong an ideal place for Canadian firms to set up shop? Many of them have already voted for it with their feet. As of June 2004, Hong Kong was home to 15 regional headquarters and 29 representative offices of companies from Canada.

A March 2005 survey of 130 companies sponsored by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) and the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada (APFC) identified Hong Kong's strengths as:

- A stepping stone for business with China and the rest of East Asia
- A source of information about Chinese business opportunities
- A source of partners for doing business in China
- A source of investment capital for their businesses.

In Hong Kong, Canadian firms of every size – even newcomers to Asia – can enjoy the best of both worlds: the comfort and certainty of doing business in a cosmopolitan city grounded in English common law operating with familiar business practices and sitting next to the world's largest and fastest growing market.

What we are trying to portray, is the greatest shift in the global economy this century. And Canada with its immense personal ties to both Hong Kong and China is sitting on the doorstep of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity

For example, high value-added technology-based Canadian products such as environmental protection products, telecommunications equipment and software that Chinese businesses crave remain secure under Hong Kong's well-established intellectual property rights protection.

Meanwhile, Hong Kong's prowess as a regional distribution centre, a role it has played for centuries, continues to grow. As much cargo enters China via Hong

Kong is through all other standard ports put together. And when Hong Kong re-exports to and from China are included, it handles about 22% of China's total foreign trade. In short, Hong Kong remains the undisputed principal pipeline to and from China.

But it's more than a place where goods are simply transferred from one airplane or ship to another. Hong Kong is a value-added stop in the global supply chain. For example, goods from multiple sources or vendors may be brought together or upgraded before onward distribution.

Hong Kong firms also offer vendor-managed inventory services, where raw materials, components and critical spare parts imported into Hong Kong are distributed just-in-time to standard factories, distribution centres and job sites. These types of services and experience will continue to make Hong Kong a significant logistics player even as China continues upgrading its manufacturing and transportation infrastructure to international standards.

Above all, Hong Kong remains the world's freest economy, according to the Economic Freedom of the World 2005 Annual Report released by the Fraser Institute of Canada and the U.S. Cato Institute. "The report shows that Hong Kong is the preferred place for doing business in the world, especially for foreign companies (including those in Canada)," says Massimo Sisti, Director of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Canada. "We will continue to maintain the core pillars of our success - rule of law, free flow of capital and information, a level playing field, an efficient and corruption-free government as well as a simple and low tax regime that make our city a great place to do business and the first track to the huge China market."

## CANADIAN SUCCESS STORIES

Hong Kong is a smart, sophisticated and affluent market. Successful companies need to consider those characteristics.

At the same time, long-held traditions also carry weight, such as the Chinese belief in gradually catching on elsewhere - that the foods we eat are also drugs. Enter Doran Nutrition Canada Ltd. (DNCL), a wholly owned subsidiary of seedling Glenview Fine Foods Inc.

DNCL has developed a method of converting omega-3 fatty acids from fish oil into a tasteless, odorless powder. Some studies have shown that a diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids may

help lower blood triglycerides and increase HDL cholesterol (the so-called "good" cholesterol). Other studies also suggest that these fatty acids may help lower high blood pressure. In other words, they are good for your heart.

"Recently, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council helped introduce us to the Tropic Dairy in Hong Kong that now adds the powder to its milk as a nutritional supplement," says Frank Sing, Ocean Nutrition's Halifax-based Director of Business Development for Asia.

"We are looking to expand our sales efforts to China where it can be added to other products such as yogurt, long-life milk and infant formula."

Such initiatives are at the heart of HKTDC services. "We are always keen to encourage and assist Canadian companies to diversify their businesses to China through Hong Kong," says Andrew Yu, Director of the Canada-Hong Kong Trade Development Council. "When charting their China-Hong Kong business strategies, they may want to consider making use of the HKTDC platform: market intelligence, business matching and marketing-sourcing opportunities."

Because of the sheer volume of activity in Hong Kong and China, a foot in the door often leads additional business. For example, engineering and architectural consultants Giffels Associates Inc., a division of Ingenium Group Inc., has recently opened a Hong Kong office to look after its growing portfolio of local projects. It started in Hong Kong as a partner with an Australian firm to supply an aerial lighting control system to the new Chep Lap Kok international airport, which was soon followed by a contract to supply a tender control system for the new passenger baggage handling system.

"Our objective with the Hong Kong office is to get our other architectural and consulting engineering divisions involved over there as well," says Ken Pugsley, Giffels' Toronto-based Director of Industrial Processes. "For potential Chinese clients, it is very simple for them to come to Hong Kong and see our existing projects in operation."

Many companies find that the opportunities in Hong Kong extend to the entire region, not just to China itself. Maple Leaf Global Foods, formerly known as Maple Leaf Foods International Inc., has maintained an office in Hong Kong since 1959, but it has recently expanded that office's



More than a place where goods are simply transferred from one airplane or ship to another, Hong Kong is a value-added stop in the global supply chain.

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minimize. "Originally we were shipping commodities - mainly pork and soybeans - into China," says Baofeng Ju, Maple Leaf's Managing Director for China. "But two years ago, 30 Canadian pork plants and many in the U.S. were allowed to ship pork products directly into China. We are now shipping products to Shanghai, Tianjin and Dalian."

Consequently, Maple Leaf is gradually updating its strategy. It will continue trading into China, but the Hong Kong office will work more closely with other Maple Leaf offices

in Korea, Japan and Singapore to handle the entire region, not just national markets. Finally, it will seek out partners in China to leverage its global reach and management experience in the meat processing and bakery goods sector. Over time, observers expect Hong Kong's role will change. "I can see maintaining a presence there to serve markets in southern China," says Michael Desforges, Toronto-based President of Maple Leaf Global Foods. "But as facilities in China improve, I



can see the day when we will also have an office somewhere in northern China as well."

#### EXPERIENCING HONG KONG

For many veteran travellers, Hong Kong is already a tourist paradise - the home of the world's most popular airport not to mention shopping, sights and sounds and scenery galore. Now, travelling to Hong Kong will become much faster and more comfortable. "I am very bullish about tourism opportunities involving Canada, Hong Kong and China," says

Philippe Lacombe, Vancouver-based Vice-President, Canada of Cathay Pacific. "Currently, the only non-stop flights to Hong Kong are from New York. However, owing to the huge potential from Canada, particularly Toronto, we are aggressively planning to introduce new aircraft planes of flying non-stop flights from there. Eventually, I envisage twice-daily, non-stop service from both Toronto and Vancouver to Hong Kong."

#### HONG KONG-GUANGDONG BUSINESS FORUM

Canadian firms have long understood Hong Kong's role as a point of introduction to the subtleties of doing business in China.

Now, Hong Kong is introducing itself to Canada.

On October 30, 2005, the Vancouver Board of Trade will host the Hong Kong-Guangdong Business Forum. Hong Kong's Chief Executive, Donald Tsang, and Guangdong Governor Haier Huibao will be leading the largest trade delegation ever to visit Canada - a contingent of about 250 executives, officials and decision makers, their briefcases bulging with an estimated 1,000 business and investment projects. Their mission is to talk to Canadian investors, exporters and others about pursuing joint opportunities.

Earlier this year, in one of his first public speeches after being sworn in as chief executive, Tsang set the stage for the Business Forum when he expressed his views on



Chief Executive Donald Tsang - leading the Special Administrative Region of China into a new era.

Hong Kong's future path. "Now, the consensus is a whole has developed the consensus that in order for our economy to sustain growth," he said, "Hong Kong must leverage the staunch support of the Mainland as well as our own global outlook, and fortify our status as an international hub of finance, trade, logistics, tourism and information. We all share the belief that by harnessing this advantage, and only by doing so, can we truly open up the way

forward for Hong Kong."

Business people in Eastern and Central Canada will get a preview of the forum on October 20 when delegates from Dongguan, one of the largest industrial cities in Guangdong, arrive at the Metro Toronto Convention for a seminar hosted by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the Hong Kong Economic Trade Office and the Hong Kong Canada Business Association. ■

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## THE VERY FREQUENT FLIER

Marc Tacchi's out to rack up a million points in two months. And keep his job.

**WHAT'S A LAZY MAN** to do when his girlfriend gets sick and tired of him striding around the house doing nothing? Instead of putting more time into his job or getting a hobby, Marc Tacchi decided to transfer his butt from the couch to an airplane seat.

This 30-year-old has even caught Hollywood's attention in the past couple of weeks, thanks to his seat in the sky. The Vancouver-based Tacchi took Air Canada's on-air offer of a North America Unlimited Pass, which costs \$3,999 a month and allows unlimited travel to more than 100 destinations in North America. Tacchi is now flying about 7,500 miles a day, attempting to rack up one million frequent-flyer points in two months.

"It's not a terrible amount of work," he says from the Maple Leaf Lounge at the Vancouver International Airport, before offering a flight to Victoria. The offer took effect Oct. 1, so far, he's been on more than 46 flights, accumulating almost 50,000 points in the first week. (By year's end, he'd have more than 72 flights—over 75,000 miles.)

Tacchi is used to being on a plane. A professional pilot who works for an air cargo company, he flies a Boeing 747 to Asia or Europe once a week. "Usually only work 16 hours a week," he says. "Which leaves me the rest of the week free."

Because he already had Air Canada Super Elite status, Tacchi gets 2.75 points for every mile he flies. So if he logs 7,500 miles a day, he really earns more than 20,000 points. Which means that, to get to the million mark, Tacchi needs to fly only about 360,000 miles, something he says he'll be able to do easily.

(The remainder he'll earn through bonus points.) One million points would be enough for 10 round-trip coast-to-coast flights to Australia. Tacchi says he'll probably use his points to fly to Thailand first.

For now, he spends his days taking the "short trips," going back and forth between Vancouver and Victoria and Vancouver and Nanaimo, which gives him a minimum of 500 miles a flight. In the evenings, he relaxes and eats, flying to Toronto or Montreal, usually using his upgrade certificates to fly business class, getting back on a plane for Vancouver after he lands.

The very frequent flier has everything fliered out. All he brings on the plane with him now is his laptop, an iPod, a wallet-size camera, and a soap with his flight times. "I read about one book a day, and that's kind of getting costly," he says. "There are no movies on my day flights, but they've been playing *March of the Penguins* on the night flights, and I've certainly seen enough programs to last a lifetime."

Other than that, he says, he's not getting bored with flying. "In between flights, usually have a half-hour to get myself a drink, shower (the Maple Leaf Lounges have "really nice" showers, he says), use the Internet, make some telephone calls. Everything I do at home, I can do in the lounge, but it's free," he says. And there has been a surprising upside to his project. "When he began, he was in a 220-lb. 'Tuckersize pounds,'" he says proudly.

This, he says, is a result of ordering the "special fruit plate" for meals (who knew?)

It's only one of the many things Tacchi discusses on his blog, "The Great Canadian Mileage Run 2005." "I have received many emails asking me about the fruit plates," he writes. "I have received even more covering glasses from restaurants. The gentleman next to me last night offered to buy a dinner meal." Tacchi is also a fan of the pot roast and mashed potato meal.

Amazingly, Tacchi is not the only one to have taken up Air Canada's offer, which was available only for two weeks in September. "There's Darren, also from Vancouver, Bob out of Toronto, and Dave from Burnaby," he says, naming his new pals. "And we've been on the same flights occasionally."

All this airtime has made him an expert. His tips? "Definitely bring a pillow for night flights. It makes a world of difference. And don't carry on the kitchen sink. If the bins are full, it's going to be under the seat in front of you, taking up your valuable room."

While Tacchi's getting out there, his blog suggests he's getting a bit lonely. In one of his most recent postings, he unashamedly describes a somewhat one-way charter, and mentions he can't wait to get back to the solitude of being on the cockpit. But in the mean time, there's that relationship to think about. "It took a little bit of convincing for my girlfriend to let me go through with this," he says. "But it's momentous self-reliance for her. At the end, she'll know she can take premium flights with me. I figure I'll get three years of vacations out of this. The only thing she has to do right now is make sure she gets me to the airport on time."

### THE INVASION

Day 3: The servers have taken over. We bought so many affordable ones we can't afford the people to manage them. How far does this spiral, sareed? Have they taken over the city? The planet? No, have they gotten to you, too? Oh, that's very, very quiet. They're L-1-S-T-6-N-1-4-G.

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# The bravest man in Canada

He pulled a drowning girl from an icy river, and months later was wounded when he sat a bouncer's life. Maybe two GG awards aren't enough for Const. Stephen Knight.

IT WAS GOING ON 4 A.M. when Const. Stephen Knight realized his shirt was wet on the left, and deepens of perspiration, but the leader of a thorough soaking. It had been an hour since Knight, off duty from his job with the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, had rescued a bouncer from a knife-wielding attacker in St. John's. He'd then thrust the assailant down, wrestled him to the ground, and passed him there until on-duty officers caught up. It was an impressive feat, but not one that should have left him drenched in sweat. The attacker ran maybe 300 m, Knight saw red, before stumbling into a parked car.

So, standing in police headquarters with his wife, Colleen, at his side, the 38-year-old constable latched up his leather jacket to investigate. The night was chilling. What had once been his white T-shirt was crimson, soaked from shoulder to hem with blood. "Oh my God, you've been stabbed," Colleen blurted. And sure enough, an incision the width of his thumb had been leaking from his left arm. He hadn't felt the wound, located a few inches above the waistline. He hadn't even felt hurt. But as he stood at the end of the police station, the gravity of his situation sunk in. "Saving your own blood gives you a whole new perspective on things," he explains. "I was scared."

Worried it's been said, it is a finite resource even in the bravest men. But if Knight's task of courage came close to missing day that morning last January, the true wonder may be that it took so long. His intervention on behalf of the bouncer was the second time in less than a year he'd put his life in peril for a stranger. The previous February, he'd made local headlines by plunging into a half-frozen river to rescue a suicidal young woman who'd thrown herself from a footbridge. Witnesses said he got hold of the



18-year-old just as the current was about to drag her beneath a blanket of ice.

In both cases, Knight has been awarded a Governor General's Medal of Bravery, which sets him apart from your garden variety do-gooder. While there are two higher awards in Canada's honour system,

the Cross of Valour and Star of Courage, a spokesman at Rideau Hall says Knight's two M of B medals of 11 more he can earn in "a pretty elite club." Since the award was created in 1972, only eight people have ever won it twice. Of that select, only three did so in the same year. If Knight is

my cape," standing on Bowring Park, a scenic green space at the southwest end of St. John's, he points to the footbridge where the young woman had jumped. It's the first time he's been back since the incident. Now, surveying the sheer rock walls surrounding the gorge below, he marvels at the efforts of three officers who arrived to pull her from the water as he pushed her toward shore. "Imagine three rocks all covered in ice," he says. "What they did was amazing."

But the facts are the facts, and Knight was the one who took a swim that day. In recent weeks, he's been meditating on the meaning of that lake-a-come-by-chance hero, having twice been hit on teenagers in crisis? Or is there some alchemy of personality, some quirk of genetics or upbringing, that propelled him to act where others might have passed? More importantly, would he do it all again?

The answer to the last question, he's decided, is yes—despite his deep-seated fear about leaving his wife and two young children alone. "It's who I am," he says, sounding resigned. "The kind of

person who goes overboard." Explaining his motivations is a messy complication. On the one hand, he was answering the burden to act that many police officers feel, regardless of whether they're on duty. But in each case, he never passed to consider a safer option. It's what Napoleon once described

as "two o'clock in the morning courage"—the reflexive urge to act, and a virtue the Little Corporal claimed he'd surely met Knight makes no claim to it. But it's fun to think that, had Napoleon watched him in action on Feb. 18, 2004, he would have been favourably impressed.

The rescue began with a passerby's panicked call to police: a girl from the nearby Wrenford Psychiatric Hospital appeared poised to jump from a bridge. It took the officers a while to locate her—at least five bridges cross the Wrenford River in the area—and just as Knight and his partner, Const. Jeff Mackey, pulled up, the girl surprised them by plunging in. "Usually, you get a chance to start talking to them," Knight says. "She didn't say a word. Just jumped."

He gestures to an expanse of a few metres downstream where the river widens. The water, he recalls, was disappearing under a mantle of ice created by sawfall and the constant freeze-thaw cycles of a St. John's winter. "When I got down here, all I could see was the girl's coat," he says. "She wasn't coming out." So, without a second to lose, he dived across the bridge, slid down a snowy on-bankment and threw himself into the water.

The cold hit him like a truck. It was 4°C that day and, worse, Knight realized too late that he was still wearing his gun belt, his flashlight and his body armour, which pretty much turned him into a human anchor. First, he sank up to his chest. Soon, as he neared the pool where the girl was trapped with her head underwater, he found himself up to his neck. But by grasping the swim cap on his head and hanging onto a rock crevice with the other, Knight was able to direct her to a small ice shelf where Const. Brian Marshall and his partner, Const.

Knight at the Wrenford River in St. John's, where the girl attempted suicide.

A HULK OF a fellow with a booming voice and an easy laugh, Knight isn't shy about telling his story, so long, he says, as you "don't make it sound like I'm putting on

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## HOST



**TERRY MOSHER, A.K.A. ASLH**

Coastal Editor, Maclean's  
As the name of Terry Mosher's daughter, is the name of plume he has used for over 30 years as the editorial page cartoonist. The Montreal Gazette, Montreal cartoon editor of Maclean's several years ago, Mosher (studious Paul Kelly) background political cartoon and showcases the work of an array of Canadian political cartoonists. Mosher was named as Officer of the Order of Canada in May 2003. To date, 38 Aslan books have been published. The most recent collection, entitled *OK, OK*, covers the recent period between September 11, 2001 and the June 2004 Canadian federal election.

## GUESTS



**SEÁN CULLEN**

Actor, Comedian, Musician

Seán Cullen's humour is a blend of stream of consciousness improv with satirical wit and broad musical talents. He has appeared on shows such as *The Ellen Show* with Ellen DeGeneres, *The Tonight Show* with Jay Leno and *The Late Show* on CBS. Cullen has many television comedy specials under his belt and is a two time Gemini Award winner. This past summer Cullen landed his first series regular role on CBC radio's *Simply Seán* on CBC Radio 1.



**RUSSELL PETERS**

Stand-Up Comedian

Over the past several years, Comedian Russell Peters' hilarious performances have delighted audiences as tour comedians. He has been nominated for two German Awards and has been featured regularly at Montreal's prestigious "Just For Laughs" Comedy Festival, the Vancouver Comedy Festival, the Edinburgh Comedy Festival, and a host of others across the globe. In 2004 Comedy show performance ranked one of The Comedy Network's most popular and requested shows of all time. Peters has been playing to sold out crowds from New York to Los Angeles and has recently signed a show deal with Warner Brothers.



**SCOTT THOMPSON**

Actor, Comedian, Television Host

Most known to fans as a member of Canada's famed sketch comedy troupe The Kids in the Hall and for his stint as the carry dancer *Show South* Thompson is anything but your average comedic talent. Thompson is currently filming *My Kibbutz* (a parody of *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*) for Global Television and Logo TV in the United States. Some say Thompson bears a striking resemblance to *Survivor* winner Donny Osmond. In fact, *The Hall* (a parody of *The Osbournes*) is "The Only Show meets *The Osbournes*!"

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Andrew Crocker, were waiting. The other officers quickly tagged her aboard, then continued to remove her maddening cologne. "You're knee-soaking wet in winter clothes," Crocker recalls, laughing. "Gaa, wet, jacket—the whole nine yards. We had some time getting him out."

Knight went home for a warm bath and was back on the job the next day. His exploits became fodder for a stream of liquor-room jokes, and he took a shading from his wife when she saw pictures of the ice-covered gorge on the evening news. No one thing

about Knight's exploits, well-known, approach him everywhere he goes

people talking about the narrow, cobbled, uneven. A proficient former player and a pretty good singer, Knight had been moonlighting that evening with an all-police Coliseum at a pub called O'Holly's Golden come to watch with a group of her girlfriends, and as closing time drew and Knight were just leaving when they heard a disturbance in a narrow lane beside the bar. Knight approached, sporting a bouncer from the bar

must have stabbed the guy in or seven times, hitting the knife every time." And yet Knight waded into the melee anyway, grappling with the men in the track suit as he swung the blade about wildly. Knight estimated he landed a punch on the assailant's chest, forcing him to flee. Then, chugging stonking parrot, he rounded a corner in time to catch the man as he scrambled and fell. Some-where in all that—he's not exactly sure when—he took the man to the timber.

A CT scan later showed the wound sunk 4½ inches into Knight's flesh, though it somehow missed his kidney or spleen. "They told me it's a credit if it's in a big boy," he jokes. "No disaster me." His wife, however, wasn't laughing. As she waited for the results of his scans, she wondered whether he'd become a pathological risk-taker. "I could have been a 33-year-old widow," she says. "I know it's part of his job, but now whenever he goes out the door, I can't help wondering if he's going to come back."

**THE KNIGHT'S** small but cozy home in the suburbs of Mount Pearl reflects the gad-

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**KNIGHT** hadn't noticed the knife wound, hadn't even felt faint, but as he stared at the cut in the police station, the gravity of his situation sunk in

that he was the only one back in the spotlight, or how close he'd come to paying with his life.

That next time, the scene was George Street, a legendary hotbed of bars and nightclubs that on weekend nights transforms into a hive of revelry, with hundreds of

surrounded by a group of three or four men. Then he saw one of the men—a guy in a white track suit—pull a knife.

By the time he reached the scene, the knife-wielding attacker was, as he puts it, "using the bouncer as a pin cushion—he





# STRIPES, DRIBBLES, HAIRY BALLS

A temple of modern art as seen through the eyes of a yokel

**STEPPING OFF** the escalator on the second floor of the Museum of Modern Art, I feel an all-too-familiar sensation: I am coming up against the limits of my intelligence. For a decade now, I have been engaged in a tentative dance with contemporary art—tempted by the urge to refuse its most-does provocations and polarize in the same abstruse room, yet fearful that by doing so, I would expose myself as being to ignorant what Gary Barney is to truth.

Enough. Here in the MoMA, which last March a year ago moved into its massive new home in midtown Manhattan, I will end this infernal internal debate. And if I can do it without knocking over the sad, neurotic gay with the big hairy genitalia, as I almost did just now, then so much the better.

We begin in front of the plasma screen that presents Stan Taylor Wood's David, described as "an enormous portrait of English soccer star David Beckham, shot in a single 66-minute take while he was sleeping." Around us, a dozen people regard the image in silence, watching as Beckham sneezes, blinks, sleeps, scratches, but mostly sleeps. When he just rubs his nose I hear a sigh. I'm afraid to wake him, but I'm pretty sure the young woman behind me just had an orgasm.

I'm not exaggerating. According to the British papers, many who gazed upon the video during an London debut described it as an erotic experience, making them feel as though they themselves had slept with Beckham—a claim that in actuality may be made only by his wife and, if the tabloids are to be believed, approximately every other heterosexual woman in Europe.

David sleeps. People begin to drift away. In London, some declared David a notorious indifferent to beauty—on par with anything caused by Michelangelo (yes, that Michelangelo). Whereas I agreed at first about 10 minutes and found it to result in roughly the same vicinity of artistic merit as Lettman's resolution-free monkey cam.

We move on. Elsewhere, a long piece of wood leans against a wall. There's another



two on the floor. A pile of lightbulbs, too. I walk with the hawkeye, careful step of a man who has discovered that, with the right marketing, his garage can cease being a "disorganized puppy" and instead be heralded as "modern art."

We approach Garry Jackson Pollock. The authors of the museum guidebook describe the painting as "a masterpiece of the drip, or pouring, technique... the image as a whole is dense and lush—yet its details have a beautiful clarity, a delicacy, a lyricism." (The fluid writing style of the art world has always been nearly reminiscent of that of a high school student who has neglected to read the novel for which he's presenting a book report.) The guidebook continues: "Some see in paintings like *One* the serene intensity of the city, others the primal rhythms of nature." And still others see a College Pro painter's drop dish after a hard summer's work.

Borderless and Newswatch aware. For years now, one of the most reliable laughs in Ottawa has been to wander into the National Gallery and spend a half-hour standing in the vicinity of *View of Port*, the striped abstract painting by Barnett Newman, which visitors still seek out to impugn, unfurling with gusto, often with profanity. An enter-

prising modern artist, if willing to take time away from preparing his latest exhibition of one-pictures, could fashion a better work from an audio recording of this commentary.

Confronted at the MoMA by Newman's massive *Vir Heroicus Sublimis* (which was presumably created after the artist awoke and declared, "I think I'll paint a red one with five stripes today"), the debate comes into focus. On one hand, I feel like a yokel laughing off these works, because many smart people see brilliance in them. But honestly, flinging some enamel as an impressionist or slapping a piece of crudely painted mucus and declaring, hey, looky here, this picture's kinda full o' spiritual meaning and symbolic content—is all seems about as valid as me lowering my backside onto this keyboard and offering the ensuing as a proof of vowels and consonants (puyuyuy v be ran) a punning commentary on man's inhumanity to man (Which by the way it is, if anyone from the MoMA should happen to ask.)

The visit is over, and so too the debate. I don't know much about art, but now I know what I like making fun of.

Scott Feschuk can be reached at [sfeschuk@shawmedia.com](mailto:sfeschuk@shawmedia.com).

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## STAINLESS STEEL MAGNOLIAS

From lady miners to supermoms, real-life renegades get a Hollywood makeover



**SOME ADVICE** If you're an actress gold-digging for an Oscar star in a movie based on the true story of a tormented yet forceful working woman who challenges male supremacy with an indomitable spirit, blame it on Sally Field. She is the template in 1999 with her Oscar-winning turn as a blue-collar freedom fighter in *Nurse Jackie*, which was followed the next year by Tracy Spack's triumph as Lorena Lynn in *Coal Miner's Daughter*. More recently, fear of the late-screen winners in the past century portended real-life maverick females for extraordinary female stereotypes. Just look down the list: Hilary Swank as cross-gendered wrestler Tia Brandon in *Boys Don't Cry*; Julia Roberts as a feminist who blows in *Zola*; Brad Pitt as a young man in gender-bending author Virginia Woolf in *The Hours*; and Charlize Theron as

serial killer Aileen Wuornos in *Monster*. This year Swank won for a second time, as a white-trash boxer in *Millions*. *Golden Rule*, and though that movie wasn't a true story, it played like a biopic.

This month's another pattern is emerging, with three dramas of true girl heroes inspired by real-life characters. In *North Country*, Theron again blows her natural glimmer, donning coveralls to portray a tor-

mented Minnesota miner who launches the first class-action suit against sexual harassment. In *The Price of Water* (by David, Ohio), Julianne Moore stars as Evelyn Ryan, a long-suffering suburban housewife with an alcoholic husband and 10 kids who keeps her family solvent by winning jungle contests in the late '50s and early '60s. In *Donnie*, Rachel McAdams plays up her tragic as Don-

nie Harvey, the delinquent daughter of Irish boxing legend Lawrence Harvey, who becomes a gun-toting beauty hunter.

Of the three movies, *North Country* stands out as a forceful, evocative piece of blue-collar drama. It also has the most solid pedigree, with a power trio of former Oscar winners—Theron, Frances McDormand and Spack—who now comes full circle, from miner's daughter to miner's mother. Theron's scenes guaranteed another nomination. She proves that *Monster* star was no flake. After a string of rapid roles in a perfect blend, from *The Cider House Rules* to *The Legend of Hip-Hop*, she appears to have liberated the acting locale from behind the opaque beauty. Even so, despite the natural acting, signs of stress emanated from the mines, and a vivid sense of place embedded in the harsh

**McDormand (left) and Theron fight sexual harassment in *North Country***

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Film | &gt;

landscape of Minnesota's Mesabi Iron Range—North Country never quite lets us forget we're watching a Hollywood movie. But then, that's so often the case with semi-truismatic screeners. Filmmakers these days go to such excessive pains to get the physical details right, only to let the script sacrifice authenticity to the over-the-top machinations of a novel fable.

North Country is a fictional tale inspired by events documented in the 2002 book *Glass Action: The Story of Lois Jensen and the Leadwork Case That Changed Sexual Harassment Law*. Jensen was one of four single mothers who found jobs at Min-

nesota's twelfth-largest mine in 1975, led by Josey's former high-school sweetheart. And as if the harassment story were not enough, it's framed by a dark mystery surrounding their insurance: Josey's schizophrenia, meanwhile, is a homespun hockey hero turned lawyer, played by a rather self-promoted Woody Harrelson. And as a truck driver and union rep, McDermott displays her vocal cheerily on-screen—but she's stuck with a soap opera storyline.

Until the sentiment starts to flat, the drama has real power. Spadeo and Richard Jenkins (*Mr. and Mrs. Smith*) tap subtle veins of emotion as Josey's social mother and embittered dad. And New Zealand director

clerks, hand-banded, boundless optimism. But as her lurch trucker husband, an alcoholic dead-end who feels emasculated by her winnings, a hard-boiled Woody Harrelson makes the movie with a cartoonish performance. You can see it start to happen from the first drunken reunion: It's as if he's out to destroy her just for the hell of it, but the film Director, her first feature, screenwriter Jane Anderson has to shoulder some blame for not getting the actor to walk a down-to-earth Harrelson with a pretty line between comedy and pathos. The film tries to be tragic and comic, and the result is a gaudy blend, like the sitcom that forms when



**Josey's Kudos**  
Griffith scores it up:  
Lois Jensen's story  
is a real-life success



Erlyn's blood mixes with spit milk after her husband sends her flying with half-a-dozen milk bottles in her hands.

The movie is an love-hate symphony. After Erlyn's carma becomes a mountain of food from a shopping spree, her husband stubbornly

assaults his twelfth-largest mine in 1975, after a sexual discrimination suit forced the mine to employ women. In 1988, after ending an intense love affair with male co-workers, she and 20 other women filed a harassment suit. Eight years later they won, but the judge refused to award punitive damages.

Jensen declined to co-optimize with the filmmakers. But the movie's spades of abuse are lifted directly from her case—and add twist: gambling, threats of rape, child in hatch house, abusive partner and an incident of a man leaving his quarters on a woman's sweater in his locker. Like Jensen, Theron's "fictional" character, Josey, is a single mother who was a teenage victim of sexual abuse. And although the notion of Theron as a mother may seem preposterous, the book describes Jensen as "a Scandinavian beauty" with "wavy blond hair, blue eyes and pale, clear skin." She's also described as "a social but flirtatious," an intriguing contradiction that's only honed at in Theron's character. The movie plays it safe, she's never allowed to go beyond her role as a heroic victim.

The full-screen score leaves no child unharmed. The pack of abusive workers is

led by Josey's former high-school sweetheart. And as if the harassment story were not enough, it's framed by a dark mystery surrounding their insurance: Josey's schizophrenia, meanwhile, is a homespun hockey hero turned lawyer, played by a rather self-promoted Woody Harrelson. And as a truck driver and union rep, McDermott displays her vocal cheerily on-screen—but she's stuck with a soap opera storyline.

Until the sentiment starts to flat, the drama has real power. Spadeo and Richard Jenkins (*Mr. and Mrs. Smith*) tap subtle veins of emotion as Josey's social mother and embittered dad. And New Zealand director

clerks, hand-banded, boundless optimism. But as her lurch trucker husband, an alcoholic dead-end who feels emasculated by her winnings, a hard-boiled Woody Harrelson makes the movie with a cartoonish performance. You can see it start to happen from the first drunken reunion: It's as if he's out to destroy her just for the hell of it, but the film Director, her first feature, screenwriter Jane Anderson has to shoulder some blame for not getting the actor to walk a down-to-earth Harrelson with a pretty line between comedy and pathos. The film tries to be tragic and comic, and the result is a gaudy blend, like the sitcom that forms when

Erlyn's blood mixes with spit milk after her husband sends her flying with half-a-dozen milk bottles in her hands.

The movie is an love-hate symphony. After Erlyn's carma becomes a mountain of food from a shopping spree, her husband stubbornly



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**Film** | BY BRIAN D. JOHNSON

## SHINE ON YOU C.R.A.Z.Y. DIAMOND

Fired with Pink Floyd, Bowie and the Stones, a Quebec gem dazzles audiences

**IN A MOVIE** that lasts more than 190 minutes, it takes up exactly two minutes and 25 seconds. That's how much of the Rolling Stones' *Sympathy for the Devil* (based on the sound track by C.A.T.Z.T.V.) is used for an over-the-hill comedy sequence set in a Boston Catholic church, with chadabags lip-synching the "wicked" and to clear the rights for that little dance of mine, the Marianne bad-boy 1914,000—which doesn't cover the film's American release. That's a pretty penny purchase for a Quebec movie with a total (95% of just \$7 million). But the producers lavished about \$800,000 of their budget on music rights. For writer-director Jean YVES, the songs were used to throw a pyrotechnic coronation of up-ages spanning two centuries in Montreal. The result is a movie wrapped in a quasi-ally of the Stones, Pink Floyd, David Bowie and Quebec pop

The gamble paid off. *R.A.Z.E.* became a box-office sensation, grossing \$5.5 million in Quebec alone and selling to distributors in 50 countries. It won the Toronto International Film Festival prize for best Canadian feature, and is Canada's official Oscar



Marc-André Boivin (left) and Alex Savare are brothers-in-law.

entry for foreign language only

It's a marvelous picture, a sprawling family drama about a boy born on Christmas Day, 1960, who grows up with four brothers, wonders if he's gay, and tumbles headlong into sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll.

As a widely lyrical narrator he dyed with fantasy, C.A.A.Z.F. resembles a more accessible, pseudo-like equivalent to Jean-Claude Lévesque's poetic reinterpretation, *L'Idole* (1992). And it's the latest example of Quebec's so-buzz and diverse film industry, which is now firing on all cylinders—thrilling both audiences and critics. It's enough to make English Canada envious. (Of course Quebec

has a clear edge, with a captive French-language audience, a coherent culture, a break in star system—and attitude. What makes its moves so different from English Canada's pulsed, angst-ridden cinema is a brash confidence in full-blooded narrative. Not just so long ago—before the recent quake of hits that began with *The Barbarian Invasions* (2003)—Villeneuve says Quebec audiences dreamed Quebec movies as "loving, annoying, egocentric."

Sounds like English Canada. Vallée, 42, is now doing the Hollywood dance, being courted by high-powered agents. His next movie will cost \$40-\$50 million. Mr. C.R.A.Z.Y. doesn't seem like *The Canadian* film *Water, Deepa* (a witty epic set in colonial India, and a better chance. But it's not Hindi, and it's not a foreign language in a country's indigenous tongue. He wants to make a film in French, he set in Canada, not India, it's his life. Now that's crazy.

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# DUDE, WHERE'S MY RIVER?

He was our funniest explorer, forever getting lost and dismissed as a nutbar

AMERICANS have no choice but to rub up against René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle. They might balk at LaSalle National Bards, or drive a classic buick LaSalle hatch car, or live in any one of the LaSalle estates that pop up from Illinois to Texas. The greatest 17th-century French explorer and arguably the most ambitious man ever to set foot in Canada (hence, La Salle today is seen as a major U.S. figure for being the first white man to explore the length of the Mississippi River. And to put a point on America's ownership of the legacy, 30 years ago when President George W. Bush authorized US\$1.75 billion to excavate the remains of one of La Salle's ships, which had sunk off the Gulf coast, and used the artifacts to fill seven LaSalle museums across the state.

Canada's claim on the man should be even stronger. After all, he lived here and made it his life's work to turn New France into a success. And yet there is very little of him left north of the border. A bridge and high school in Kingston, Ont. A small museum on the island of Montreal. The name on Prince Maurice Paul Martin's federal riding, LaSalle-Nasau. The story of how Lachine, Que., got its name. That's about it.

Philip Marsland is out to rectify this crime against our own history with his new book, *Greatest Explorer Here the French Almost Conquered North America*. Had La Salle succeeded in his most visionary of goals—turning the heartland of North America into a territory ruled by Louis XIV—our continent's history would be a stretch, and hence Canadian, one. But in the end it was a failed dream, a ghost empire swept away by the success of English America.

In La Salle's followers, rather than his successes, that make him such an intriguing figure. He had the obvious attributes of a great explorer: He was at once in the forest and could hunt and saddle like a native. He was capable of amazing feats of endurance. He demonstrated a relaxed sense of strategy in politics and geography. It was the same time, he battled with him as much as the absurd.

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ECCENTRIC FRENCH EXPLORER IN NORTH AMERICA TRIED TO FIND CHINA BY WAY OF THE GREAT LAKES, FOUND THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER ONCE AND FAILED TO LOCATE IT A SECOND TIME AND WOUND UP IN TEXAS! DURING HIS LAST SEARCH HIS MEN MURDERED HIM. LA SALLE WAS BURIED NEAR NAWATSOOTIA, TEXAS.

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John Grisham is the special ad columnist for *Philips's* *Life* or *Not?* *Philips's* new book, *Planet Economics*, is now available across Canada.



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himself into thinking he could converse with any Indian. But when his first negotiation stopped in a Scowas village near Lake Ontario, La Salle soon found himself in dire need of an interpreter. And on his return, after failing to find the route to the Orient, he discovered that his nephew/son had returned him from La Chine (finally, China) in a joke. Not content with one grand failure, he went on to attempt a revolution in fur trading economics by building the first proper trading ship on the Great Lakes. The Griffon sank its first time out, laden with a future in beaver pelts.

In 1682, La Salle famously became the first white man to travel to the mouth of the Mississippi. He thus claimed the entire Mississippi Valley for France and found himself on the verge of transforming a continent. Not only could his claim put the fur trade solely in French hands, but bifurcating North America in this way would halt the westward expansion of the British colonies in the Atlantic coast and put a stop to Spanish ambitions as well. La Salle knew it would never be possible to control the continent from French Quebec City. But a outpost on the Mississippi and a chain of forts up the spine of North America? Now that could be an empire.

Unfortunately, his attempt to establish a settlement at the mouth of the river didn't quite work out. In sailing around Cuba to avoid the Spanish fleet, La Salle and Tanguay le Gallon de Bougeau, who commanded the *Bellefleur* ships and warships, managed to miss the Mississippi altogether. The pair squabbled until their trading was until they ended up on the coast of Texas. (The quest between Bougeau and La Salle are among the most amusing in history. In one letter to a friend, the admiral says of La Salle: "There are very few people who do not think that his little is 'trapper'.") Audacious indeed, at which point the leadership of the expedition would revert to himself, La Salle became convinced that desolate Mangrove Bay and what is now called Gascosa Creek was actually the Mississippi delta. He landed, erecting two ships in the process. Bougeau left, and the grand dream unravelled almost immediately.

Left alone in the Texas desert, almost the entire expedition died from sickness or misadventure—killed by snakes and alligators, or by Indians when they wandered too far afield. La Salle eventually abandoned the colossus effort to find the real Mississippi, and resided by one of his own men in 1687 dis-

ting the creek. While France did return to found Louisiana a decade later, that modest colony never fulfilled La Salle's original design.

What makes La Salle so captivating is his inability to see his own vision through to completion. His plans, while brilliant in conception, required the efforts of a supporting cast to achieve success, but he was singularly unable to demonstrate the leadership skills necessary to command men



La Salle died in Texas in 1687, murdered by one of his own men during a rivalry.

He realized, he figured, he kept his own counsel when it was best to be open, he habitually accused others of plotting to undermine or misrepresent him (with good reason, it turns out). He left his men alone in critical moments, and disaster was often the result. It is now popular among historians to argue that he was insane, or at least insane-depressive. But La Salle was brilliant in selling the trade to kings and financial backers. He just couldn't deliver on the track.

Marchand interprets moments of La Salle's adventures with contemplation of his own Catholicism and French-Canadian roots. He then adds a new dialogue of his search for remnants of the French North American empire. La Salle envisioned. The book goes a long way in redeeming a portion of



CAROL STANLEY  
Philip Marchand:  
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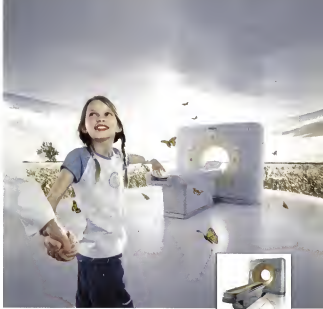
La Salle's legacy for all Canadians.

But La Salle deserves much more than a melancholy banner for a lost people. Marchand never captures the soul of La Salle and his status as an archetypal trichotomy—a controversial character whose flaws inevitably brought about his own demise. There is room for nuance and playfulness here as well. (The only English language fiction about La Salle is, ironically enough, by a U.S. writer.) Thus again, if you read merely for laughs, it starts to look like something a lot more fun. And maybe that's where La Salle's ultimate reconnection lies.

Australians have no trouble appropriating their historical figures for a bit of a laugh. Ned Kelly, the greatest Aussie bushranger, was another man of vision lost down by the details. His plan to build suits of armour for his rubber band, to take an troops sent to quell his reign of lawlessness, was brilliant—if only he'd remembered about his legs. After shooting a vine at Kelly's well-covered head and chest, the soldiers eventually lowered their aim and killed him like a tree.

For his fair dinkum efforts at innovation, Kelly has been immortalized in songs, plays, operas, movies, the opening ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Summer Olympics and, most famously, in a series of paintings of an empty helmet by Australian modernist Sidney Nolan. "Over Ned" is a national icon, a craggy old rogan-and-oligan of fun all at the same time.

So if you can't laugh at an explorer who misses the mighty Mississippi by a few degrees, keeps heading west and then can't win his followers that some goddamned trodden process in the middle of the desert coast of Texas—not even a river, but a creek—is really the largest river system in North America, well, who can you laugh at? Perhaps the way to enter La Salle into our pan is to concentrate on bringing him alive in our present. If Sir Ernest Shackleton, the failed Antarctic explorer, can earn a second life as an icon for modern business leaders, surely we can do the same thing for La Salle. Leadership lessons from Canada's most troubled explorer? He could even become part of the business lexicon. Visionary givers gone awry due to managerial incompetence? Someone must have pulled a La Salle. Can workers making fun of you behind your back? You're suffering from LaSalle syndrome. Aha! You're paranoid? Maybe everyone is out to get you. It's one way to save Canadian history—not with a bang, but a chuckle. **B**



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# THE LAUGHING PROPHET

At 82, and filled with despair for humanity, Kurt Vonnegut is as funny as ever

AT AN AGE when many people focus on the past, Kurt Vonnegut no longer looks back. Like Billy Pilgrim, protagonist of his 1965 masterpiece, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, the American writer used to regularly find himself "unstuck in time," so quote a marmoset phrase from that book, has consciousness flitting from one era of his life to another. But Vonnegut has clearly yielded to the linear theory of time. "Do you guys still have American Day up there?" he asks in an interview from his Manhattan home, answering, in his own

thoughtful fashion, a question about his upcoming 83rd birthday on Nov. 11. "The only possible explanation for World War I—a war fought about nothing—is the second war. We just keep plagiarizing the future."

But Vonnegut himself remains firmly anchored in a present he finds infinitely depressing, as the pieces in his new, near-50-year collection, *A Man Without a Country*, make clear. He won't even try to explain the Viet Nam quagmire by reference to Iraq. "Viet nam was an exercise in mistaken identities, Iraq is a great mystery ending. And there's no optimism or optimism ever—Americans are out of knowledge. Our leaders, the Congressmen from this, know this. We're proud of being ignorant, that knows virtue at our core. We aren't flattered by knowledge like foreign, so we can be trusted."

So speaks Kurt Vonnegut in 2005, no longer the mid-20s optimist of the 1960s, but a paymaster of despair, so mordant that in interviews and in his book—the title taken from Edward Everett Hale's 1863 classic short story about a man whose country gave up on him—he frequently has to pause to explain when he's joking. (For the record, when he writes that humans are "things you can't even drink web-power" and "fossil-fuel addicts in denial about their dwindling supplies, he's dead serious.) He speaks in the same tones about his own life: the newborn isn't a testament, "it's a whole mess," new writers, he says emphatically included, were only just after age 45; he's doomed to be a funny for whatever years remain to him.

Many people might consider his assessment of current American politics to be merely matter of fact, but Vonnegut does exaggerate mightily (and deliberately) on



Humans, the author believes, are fossil-fuel addicts in denial about dwindling supplies.

the personal side. As he knows perfectly well, many writers have written good books—sometimes their best—in old age. *A Man Without a Country* is no *Slaughterhouse-Five* (then again, few books are), but the

essays are often beguiling and—despite antic—very funny. Daniel Simon, who edited them, thanks the use of contemporary and contemporary should be read as a "transformation book," the work of the album from *Slaughterhouse-Five*, who craft their words as random to quanta of messages



A MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY  
Kurt Vonnegut  
Seven Stories  
\$22.95

without beginning, middle, end or moral.

Vonnegut is not nearly as world-weary or cynical as critics tend to depict him (he's not cynical at all, of course, considering how often he cites the Sermon on the Mount as the ultimate guide for human behavior). The world commentator (or looking for it) is possible. In interviews, there's no end of topics on which Vonnegut is happy to converse with a passion that belies any idea of a man too despairing to care. For example, he seems to genuinely believe Canada has "stuffed all the good parts of *The Communist Manifesto*." (How late the night does someone's own political radar have to be to think that?)

But nothing annoys Vonnegut more than discussing his country's history and cultural traditions. He calls himself a proud "Great Lakes American," an old-time Roosevelt Democrat who thinks the best staples in American life have always derived from the nation's heartland, hence so his personal heroes Mark Twain, Abraham Lincoln and socialist leader Eugene Debs. As that he parts company with many of his political allies, foreign and domestic, who despise the Midwest as fly-over country separating the nation's most liberal from the two coasts. "Yes, I see a whole other tradition, boy do I ever! But two of the greatest American authors of the 20th century did everything they could to deny they were from St. Louis, Mo.—T.S. Eliot, who ended up talking like the archbishop of Canterbury, and Tennessee Williams, who sounded like he had a mouthful of teeny girls. They didn't want a really pronounced life name. That's why critics didn't like me: public school, Indianapolis, anyway, fiction."

But readers like him, and Vonnegut laughs with a chain smoker's wheeze as he contemplates his lack in life and letters. There's always good news and bad news, he shrugs, with in the lead-up to the classic Kurt Vonnegut joke. The bell of it is, "we know as little about life, we really don't know which is which."



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## IS THAT THE SOUND OF LAUGHTER?

This season, sitcoms come out of their coma

**DURING TV PILOT SEASON** in Hollywood earlier this year, Vancouver actor Colin Hanks had to choose between auditioning for a legal drama or a situation comedy. "If anyone following TV trends, it would have been a no-brainer—after all, crime is hot and sitcoms are dead. "I had to decide," says Hanks. "It's funny, it's sweet and I love the characters, or I'm going to be a doctor. So, I made my decision, and it was a pretty easy one." He chose the comedy and landed the role of Robin, the perfect woman, in *How I Met Your Mother*, about two promising New Yorkers. The pilot was picked up, and just two weeks the show got the green light for a full season—one of four early season hit comedies, including *Everybody Hates Chris*, *My Name Is Earl* and *The War at Home*. Turns out, and actors, like Hanks, were in the mood for something light—resulting in a successful rebound for a genre that in recent years has been nothing but a disappointment.

Some have gone to the networks, responsible for the mean streak like *Whipped* and *The Mentalist*. But the reality and crime-drama showcased success was negligible too. This year, both parties have stepped up. Not worst have taken a shift with non-traditional series like *My Name Is Earl* (which parodies critical goes straight after winning the lottery) and *Everybody Hates Chris* (embracing childhood of Chris Rock), despite the fact they have the same single-camera laugh track fed as the low-rated *Arrested Development*. Audiences, meanwhile, resonated early on to these series, even though the creators are still working out the kinks. It's only with *How I Met Your Mother* that the therapy has had to compromise.

*Mother* is a farcical sitcom, created



Hanks, A.A. Groppe, and Zooey Deschanel's *Smash*. In *How I Met Your Mother*, a real-kiss slapper

laughter and all, that from the start has been a slice slapper with lovable characters. Think *Friends* minus Phoebe. Among a gang of five buddies, Maxwell and Lily are engaged (like Monica and Chandler if they looked up in their early 30s). Their roommate Ted (a less witty Ram) is on a mission to find "The One" Robin (a less sexy Rachel) seems to be it—but just wants to be friends. And Barney (Jesse in a suit) is the

**'WE WANTED  
to write about our lives  
as-is and behold, it  
ends up kind of looking  
like *Friends*'**

obnoxious fifth wheel. "It's a bit of unfortunate," says Carter Bays, co-creator with Craig Thomas, "because we wanted to write about our lives, and as it happens we were everything while guys bring in New York. Lo and behold, it ends up kind of looking like *Friends*."

It's doubtful, though, that *Friends* would ever have come out making one of the leads a foreigner. "I was told today," says Deschanel, 33, "that they may be making Robin Canadian. They're doing a Thanksgiving episode and I'm not going home and they're like, 'Why?' and she's like, 'Because I'm Canadian.' That would be awesome."

*Smash*, once a term model, was on the short-lived ABC drama writer in 2003. This year, she's surrounded by cult faves. Co-star Jason Segel comes from much-adored high school drama *Freaky Out Girls*, and Mykonos played Willow, the lovable lesbian with on Buffy the Vampire Slayer—though her *Mother* character is closer to her head, doing sex field role in *American Pie*. And there's Neil Patrick Harris, who's defied all laws of TV stereotyping by going from Dr. Dinkley Hower to the smarmy Barney Stinson and Josh Radnor, who plays Ted, the sex-obsessed-depressive *Barney's* *Tear Guide* (born in *Not Another Teen Movie*).

This is Bays and Thomas's first series, though they were writing collaborations for David Letterman, and on *Quintuplets*, *Oliver Beards* and *American Dad*. They were around when success was out of focus. "I went through periods where you're just out of winning things that are supposed to be funny and things that look like a sitcom," says Bays, 33. "Now we're writing about real life and things that we care about. There's one of the things that a lot of sitcoms have in common, like *Everybody Hates Chris*—he's writing about his life."

Of course not everyone's with the program, and for now this can't, far from being a mission to the sitcom-audience. *The War at Home*, *Ten*, *Friends*, *Out of Practice* and *How I Propose* are fighting hard to keep the sitcoms *Mother* helps all. ■

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## BACKTALK



### Music | The definitive history of the Band carries a lot of weight

From left:  
Manuel,  
Dylan, Helm,  
Danko and  
Robertson

Putting together the definitive box set of the Band—chronicling their time with *Harlan Hawkins*, Bob Dylan and/or other even-involved major defective work. To come up with over 10 hours of material, including a number of unreleased tracks and live performances, producers started through bootlegs, archives and old studios that no longer were in business. “If you’re always in the same city or working out of the same place, everything doesn’t become as scattered,” says guitarist and songwriter Robbie Robertson, 62, who oversees the project. “But, you know, we were scattered—and it shows.”

Robertson’s referring to much more than the many different locations the band (consisting of him, Garth Hudson, Rick Danko, Richard Manuel and Levon

Hendrix) recorded in. Much of it has been spilled over the trials of the Canadian winter that added so much to North America’s musical landscape. And the box set’s accompanying hardcover book fleshes out their tragic story, noting when certain members started messing with heroin—and when Robertson left Woodstock for Montreal, then Manila, Cuba, and the band’s communal spirit began to wane.

The first CD has the most previously unheard songs, but the fifth disc is full of gems—including live tracks from Dylan and the Band’s 74 tour and an early version of “Nightfall,” with Robertson playing piano and singing. (Danko takes the lead vocals on the released version.) “I had just written it and I’m playing it for the other guys, like I did

in several  
video docu-  
ments the  
Band’s record-  
ing career  
from 1964 to  
1976, with 11  
previously  
unreleased  
tracks, a DVD  
with nine live  
performances  
that have  
never been  
seen in their  
entirety and a  
160-page  
coffee table  
book.

on anything,” says Robertson, who doesn’t know who would have pushed “Nightfall.” “I had just taken it out of the oven, and said, ‘Taste this!’”

The release of this collection dovetails with Martin Scorsese’s new documentary *No Direction Home* (Feb. 12), which has rare footage of the Band (minus Helm) backing up Dylan on his controversial ’66 electric 11 K tour. In it, Robertson, then 22, never cracks a smile. “You don’t realize you are part of a musical revolution when it’s happening,” he says. “You just think, ‘Geez, I’m doing something here and people really don’t like it.’ But you don’t change a thing and eventually the whole world comes around.” During the Band’s 20th tour with Dylan, says Robertson, “everybody acted like, ‘I know this was the real deal’ and blah blah blah. But we were saying to ourselves, ‘Right, I think we had written your name down on the list three or four times.’” All is forgiven now and with this box set, even the bandwagon jumpers are being rewarded. —SHANON MCNEIL





## EINSTEIN AT OKTOBERFEST

In Kitchener-Waterloo, Innovation goes hand in hand with lederhosen

AT THE TRANSYLVANIA Club on Andrew Street in Kitchener, Ont., writers served haup-  
ing plates of schnitzel, sausage and sauerkraut to hundreds of revelers. Uncle Hans, the  
Oktoberfest mascot—furry, with a spherical orange head—battered into the hall while the  
band played *Karl Oka der Barrel*. John Tamar, the former game master of Canada-  
furry, with a spherical orange head—topped the keg. Trainers of Irish beer were rushed  
to every table.

So this is Oktoberfest. But a few blocks away, at the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical

Physics in Waterloo, a different  
crew was enjoying a lecture  
about trends in philosophy in  
1905, the year Einstein published  
some of his more important dis-  
coveries. This was part of Perime-  
ter's month-long, ambitious and  
very popular *EinsteinFest*.

This is another part of life in  
this increasingly flourishing  
region of southwestern Ontario  
bordered, roughly, by the cities  
of Waterloo, Kitchener and Cam-  
bridge—Canada's "technology  
triangle," as some people there  
call it. Tradition and innovation,  
beer and science. At each  
the city's tagline to some stretch  
his lederhosen and said, "The only problem  
with these things is, there's no place to put  
a BlackBerry."

The guy sitting next to him was Tim Jack-  
son, a founding partner of Tech Capital Part-  
ners, a venture-capital company that only  
funds startups in the area. Jackson's company  
started with a \$5-million fund in 1995, came  
back with a \$330-million fund a few years later,  
and launched a \$50-million fund earlier this  
spring. (After a couple of days in Waterloo, you  
get used to seeing growth curves like that.)  
There's no shortage of candidates for Tech  
Capital's seed money, Jackson said. "We're  
lazier than we've ever been. Last year, we  
looked at 144 deals; this year, 150. This year, to  
date, we're somewhere north of 150."

How did all these entrepreneurs spring up  
from the region's heavy soil? One big reason,  
of course, is the University of Waterloo, such  
a formidable school it was the only Canadian  
dominance when MIT's Gates visited its univer-



sities last week to inspire students about the  
 joys of software engineering.

But lots of towns have universities. (There's  
another very good one, Wilfrid Laurier,  
in this region.) Only the University of Water-  
loo made two smart choices a generation  
ago. First it increased Canada's largest co-  
operative education program. Students  
spend a huge chunk of their university years  
working in the private sector. It gets them  
into the habit of thinking about how ideas  
can be made to work in the real world.

The second smart decision, much less  
noticed, was that intellectual property  
would reside with individual Waterloo grads  
instead of with the university. Well, Tamar  
out a researcher who can keep the money  
he takes away in the market comes up with  
a lot more marketable ideas. A 1999 study  
showed Waterloo—just one university out  
of 84 surveyed in Canada—had produced  
25 per cent of all the spinoff companies

from university research.

So Waterloo gives up the royalty benefits  
from all its smart graduates? Don't cry:  
the university gets the money back another  
way, in numerous donations from happy grads  
who wind up making rich. Mike Laskaris,  
the Research In Motion president, helped  
build the Perimeter Institute and has given  
\$50 million, so far, to his alma mater's Institute  
for Quantum Computing.

Quantum computing amounts to a long  
term bet that new discoveries about the com-  
plex behavior of individual atoms can form  
the basis for computers far faster, smaller  
and more complex than anything now pos-  
sible. Raymond Laflamme, the institute's  
director, has boundless ambition for the  
place. "At present, with nine or 10 researchers,  
we are equivalent to MIT, Cal Tech or Cam-  
bridge," Laflamme told me. "We want to go  
up to 25. And then there will be no one else  
like us."

There's a lot of that spirit going around  
Waterloo and the neighboring towns. I  
visited Delta Corp., whose decidedly com-  
plex digital imaging systems are the eyes  
for NASA's Mars probe and for new all-  
digital cameras for Hollywood. Delta has  
grown by 34 per cent a year for most of a  
decade, barely noticed in Canada but with  
out serious competition in the world.

Is all this innovation mostly trivial or pie-  
in-the-sky? Hardly. The Conference Board of  
Canada reports that Kitchener will lead the  
country in economic growth for 2005, along  
with Saskatoon, whose own knowledge econ-  
omy is in the early stages of a comparable  
boom. And what do Classification and In-  
novation Fest have in common? Everything, I'm  
told. The community spirit and cohesive-  
ness on display at Oktoberfest are as much  
an asset to the area's schools or location. A  
policy work would tell you the tech triangle's  
abundant intellectual capital helps build human  
capital. (I'll just say they watch it go.)

**Be curious.** [backpage@toronto.com](mailto:backpage@toronto.com)  
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